

STORY *AND* SONG



LOUIS F. CURTIS



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STORY AND SONG





I know not how the marvel grew,
That nature made one model do;
Graving the features bold or fine
Alike in every shade and line.

STORY AND SONG

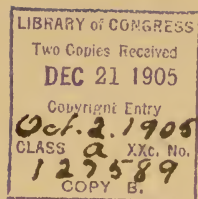
BY
LOUIS F. CURTIS

ILLUSTRATED BY
FLORINE HYER

If please ye, listen to my lore
SPENSER



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1905

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U. D. K. 7-18-30.

DEDICATION

TO WELL BELOVED WIFE WHO FONDLY GAVE
AS WARM A HEART AS MAN COULD EVER CRAVE,
AND TO MY MOTHER WHOSE SINCEREST LOVE
HATH PROVED THE EARNEST OF A HEAVEN ABOVE,
I DEDICATE THIS LITTLE BOOK OF SONG.
PERCHANCE IT MAY A HAPPY HOUR PROLONG
OR SOOTHE A SORROW WHEN THE DAY IS DONE,
OR MAY ITS RYTHM AND THE RISEN SUN
FOND RECOLLECTION STRIKE, A SILVER BELL,
TO ECHO SWEET AND TELL I LOVED YE PASSING WELL.

FOREWORD

The greater part of this volume was presented in manuscript form before the Progress Literary Circle of Los Angeles, California. The kind reception accorded the verse by the members of the Progress Circle encouraged the Author to offer the work to a larger audience.

*Los Angeles,
September 3, 1905*

L. F. C.

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GURTH

I

A Norseman I, although my face
Betrays the blood of the Latin race,
The reason is not far to trace ;
A sea-king home from southron raid
In fetters brought a Gallic maid
But ere the summer-time was done
The conqu'ror's heart was lost and won.
He bowed himself to woman's wiles —
Became a vassal of her smiles,
Then in an ancient runic hall
The Norse was wedded to the Gaul.
This the sire and the witching dame
From whom our very life-blood came.

II.

Twin brothers were we, Gurth and I,
Born where the iceberg cleaves the sky,
Where Odin's offspring Baldur bright
Is hidden by eternal night ;
Baldur fair as the sunset glow
Whom Hoder slew with the mistletoe.
Our sire a rover, Ocean grim
Ever he vowed wás calling him

STORY AND SONG

Calling, chanting : “ Come thou to me,
Thou art a child of the billows free.”

III

Oh, the sea, the sea ; thou treacherous sea !
Luring the children of men unto thee,
Charming them out with your sirenous song,
The brave and the fair, the young and the strong,
Enticing them on with maiden-sweet breath
Till they lie enbosomed asleep in death.

IV

And so our sire southward went ;
He ravaged Gaul and pillaged Kent,
Then homeward sails, his vessel toils
Laden deep with the richest spoils —
Laden deep — and thé spoils are rare —
One is a maid surpassing fair,
Her flaxen tress and eyes like Danes’
Proclaim the Saxon in her veins.
White as a lilly, her drooping head
Sign of a heart that inward bled,
Drooped still lower until she died
For love of man on the Kentish side.
I was a child yet the maiden’s grace
Carved an ever-remembered face,
Full of beauty ; her spirit fair
So oft absorbed in silent prayer.
Her fate taught me as years increase
A hate of war, a love of peace.

GURTH

V

I was a youth of eight and ten
When our roving sire sailed again,
Steered away to the sunny south
To feed the famine-stricken mouth ;
And with the father journeyed Gurth
To match himself with men of worth ;
A stripling, lithe and strong and tall,
Eager to answer the battle's call.
But O, his mother's heart was rent
With anguish like when death is sent.
With streaming eyes, at love's behest,
She bound him closely to her breast,
As if she knew by mystic ken
She ne'er would hold him there again.
And thus it proved; ten years have sped,
Our mother sleeps amid the dead !
She quenched with tears the living flame
For sire and son who never came —
For sire and son, but more for Gurth,
Who seemed the chosen flower of earth.

VI

My mother, as I upward grew,
Instilled the mother tongue she knew,
Till Gallic speech and songs they sung
Were wedded to my Norway tongue.
I owned my brother's form and face,
His voice, his walk, yet lacked his grace ;

STORY AND SONG

So closely molded were we twain,
That kindred searched and searched in vain
For blemish, mole, or shade of hair
To know who stood before them there.
And though they sought with frequent mirth,
They oft declared that I was Gurth,
Or Gurth was I. One uncle swore
We traded garments that we wore ;
Another vowed the god of storms
Had granted power to change our forms.
I know not how the marvel grew,
That nature made one model do,
Graving the features bold or fine
Alike in every shade and line.

VII

But outer garments only hide
The unseen souls who there abide.
The mask of flesh is but a sphinx
Screening the thing that toils and thinks.
The mind itself still puzzles mind —
Revealing little hid behind
The wall of flesh ; we stand and gaze
Upon the threshold of this maze
But may not enter. Search how we will
This baffles all our lore and skill.

VIII

We brothers of the selfsame race,
So near alike in form and face,

GURTH

Within were of a different mold.
My brother Gurth was strong and bold,
While I, perchance as strong as he,
Was wedded unto minstrelsy.
He followed close the god of war —
Treading upon the heels of Thor —
While I did butchery abhor.
My senses sickened at the sight
Of blood. I often prayed to Night
To make an end of awful slaughters
Of stalwart men, of dames and daughters.
But unto Gurth, the battle strife
Even in youth was the breath of life.

IX

Long years have fled—no message came
From those who bore our family name.
No rumor ran of sire or son;
I knew not if their lives were done —
I knew not if they captives lay —
Within a dungeon hid from day.
But since my saddened mother slept
I deemed my duty tardy kept
To speed wherever billows led
To seek my kinsmen quick or dead.
In mighty erlking's lofty boat
My humble harp was soon afloat;
And I and ten score men abide
Within the vessel's roomy side.

STORY AND SONG

Ten sister ships have trimmed their sails
To catch with ours the fav'ring gales.
A hundred banners beat the air —
A mighty host is chanting prayer —
A prayer to Odin and to Thor
For brave success and spoil of war.
A thousand vikings crowd aboard
Then outward, downward through the fiord.
One lingering look across the lee
And erlking steered for the open sea.

X

Three months have passed. I may not stay
To tell the struggles night and day,
Of fearful battles lost and won,
Of cities sacked at set of sun ;
From Friesland coast to Afric's bay
Our lurid torches lit the way.
Full many vessels homeward creep
With harvests only swords can reap.
Then swift return with added hosts
To join us on Iberian coasts.
Through all these days I ne'er forgot
My sire and Gurth but found them not :
With Gallic speech and harp and song
I journeyed weary miles along,
And little needed deep disguise —
I seemed a Gaul to Gallic eyes.
Through star-lit nights I trudged afar
To view some captive man of war.

G U R T H

Then at the dawn would haste away
To where our ships at anchor lay ;
Then sailing, sailing, still to south,
We ride at last near Tiber's mouth.

XI

That morning ere the noon of day
I sped across the level bay,
And in a friendly sheltered cave
Secured my bark against the wave.
Then with my harp upon mine arm
I ventured forth with no alarm;
For music with its power to charm
Had ever kept me safe from harm.
I wandered shoreward till the wave
Was guarded by a castle brave,
Then turning landward hoped to meet
A peasant maiden I might greet.
As I have trudged from door to door
I've learned to trust the lowly poor,
And maiden tears were won't to flow
As I retold my mother's woe,
How her fond heart life's burden bore
For spouse and son who came no more.

XII

By chance, or is there ever chance,
Anear the way of my advance,
Open I saw a postern gate
Luring me onward to my fate.

STORY AND SONG

Within a spacious garden, fair
As are Vahalla's gardens rare,
Mine eyes beheld a temple stand —
Such fanes as dot the Gallic land
With cross atop, the faithful sign
Of Him the Latins deem divine.
And from the door ajar I heard
A prayer but understood no word.
The language strange, but word and tone
Were such the good alone may own,
With accents pure, the voice of love
Must surely win its way above.
I stood entranced and thought me hid
Behind a flowering pyramid,
Hoping to view the one whose voice
Had bade my inmost heart rejoice.

XIII

Anear she came a princely air
Enrobed a woman passing fair ;
The glow of youth was on her cheeks,
Where ere mine eye perfection seeks
Of rounded form, of orb and brow
It seemed to shine before me now ;
And costly garb and noble mein
Proclaimed her little less than queen.
I would have fled but her dark eye
Transfixed me as I turned to fly,
And ere I could a footstep claim
Amazed I heard my brother's name.



And ere I could a footstep claim,
Amazed, I heard my brother's name.

GURTH

“Ah, Gurth,” she said, while swift surprise
Was written large within mine eyes,
But there enchained I had no choice
Save hear the music of her voice.
“Ah, Gurth, thou art returned so soon ?
My prayer hath surely wrought this boon ;
What say the leader of the host,
Whose sails o’er shadow half the coast ?
Did he accept the profered gold
To leave unscathed my castle bold ?
Or must the Christ and men of war
Fight pagans and the demon Thor ?
How did the robbers and their king —
Whose praises I have heard thee sing —
Receive thee Gurth ? Thou dost not smile
I fear the Norway greed and guile
Were not o’ercome — that we must fight
For life and home, for God and right.
Speak Gurth, why art thou silent now,
What thoughts are lurking in thy brow ?”

XIV

O, ye with wisdom calm and clear
Solve me the problem written here.
Behold the maid with flashing eye,
How could I all her power defy ?
She seemed an eagle and a dove,
A dual nature born to love
Yet vengeance take if one defied
Her rightful rule, her power and pride.

STORY AND SONG

Soft her bosom yet I could feel
Her heart might grow as hard as steel.
I saw anear me men at arms
To guard the lady's ample charms ;
Beheld the castle's frowning wall,
The dungeon should the mistress call.
Yet could I traitor prove to Gurth,
My brother, doubly so, by birth ?
Here was his home, his praise she sung,
And he had taught her Norway's tongue.
Now he had gone to buy release
With gold, to bribe the erlking's peace ;
I seemed to stand in deep disgrace
Wearing my brother's copied face.
She thought me Gurth : what could I say
Except some words that meant delay,
Hoping meantime on Gurth's return
That she would all the secret learn.

XV

" I pray your ladyship will wait
An hour or more ere I relate
My story, all I saw and heard
You then shall know, each look and word.
But now I seem to lack the power
Be gen'rous, grant me but an hour."
" Ah, Gurth," she spake in sweet reply,
" Take time you wish, nor tell me why
Thou hast my castle, life and land
Within the keeping of thy hand.

G U R T H

Ten years ago, a stripling tall,
Thou cam'st a prisoner to the hall.
Thy pirate life was forfeit then —
When I a little maid of ten
On bended knees with pleading cries,
Besought my sire for this prize.
He gave your life to me ; since then
Thou knowest all that we have been :
How when my dame and father died
I raised thee gov'nor near my side.
My men at arms thy warriors are,
And you my pride and power share.
Shall I who dowered thee with power
Refuse to grant a single hour !
Take hours and days, no soul shall seek
A word until you will to speak.
Enter and doff the Norse disguise
At sight of it my father dies
Again before my maiden eyes ;
And in my mem'ry there revives
The horror, murder, lust, and war
Of those who follow cruel Thor.
Fierce are tigers rending their prey
Norsemen are fiercer far than they !”

XVI

With that we entered side by side
A room to fit a prince's pride,
But ere mine eye had glanced it o'er
My fair conductress quit the door.

STORY AND SONG

I stood alone midst wealth and worth —
Mementoes rich of absent Gurth —
Puzzled I seek in vain to shape
A course by which I may escape;
Yet strangely in my hour of need
I hoped that I might not succeed.
I safety sought yet would not flee
Were every doorway ope to me.
That woman's voice, for good or ill,
Had shorn my strength and bound my will.

XVII

An hour had passed it may be twain,
Yet all my plannings were in vain.
Then heard the lady's voice once more
Entreating me to view the shore.
“Look, Gurth! behold the robber fleet
Is lifting high each spar and sheet.
With anchors hoist this landward breeze
Will sweep them out upon the seas.
I thank thee Gurth, thou didst prevail
Behold the Norsemen setting sail!”
'Twas sadly true, O, how I yearned
To know if Gurth had yet returned.
Far as mine eye could outward reach
I swiftly scanned the lacey beach;
No boat was seen, none near the coast
Returning from the viking host.
I wished to flee where cavern dark
Gave refuge to my tiny bark,

GURTH

Then seaward row with steady hand
Bring back my kinsman to the land.
But distance great and Norse advance
Bereft me of mine only chance.
Then as their sails grew big with breeze
I sank before her on my knees;
And deeming life but little worth
Confessed that I was never Gurth.
“Who art thou, then?” A mocking smile
O’erlit her features in denial,
Swift followed scorn and even now
Her flashing eye and frowning brow
Gave warning on the instant there
She might be fierce as well as fair;
And written in her Latin face
The craft and cunning of her race
Bred quick suspicion; saw the sign
Of traitrous plot in words of mine;
And with a meaning glance she felt
A jeweled dagger at her belt.
“Since Gurth denies himself to me,
Who art thou, then?” demanded she.
I then in accents scarcely bold
My living story briefly told.
“His brother I. Let me relate
I hither came to learn his fate.
Ten long and weary years have passed
Since I beheld my kindred last;
And when my weeping mother died
I journeyed on the moving tide,

STORY AND SONG

Searching from Norway's icy shore
For sire and son who came no more.
My harp now in thy garden fair,
A sweet companion in despair,
Here venturing all I haply came
And heard you breathe my brother's name.
Twin brothers we, as thou mayst trace
Resemblance close in form and face.
I sealed my lips till thou shouldst learn
The truth on noble Gurth's return,
But since he sails I hope to claim
Thy mercy in my kinsman's name."
I sought her eyes, a softened air
Foretold that I had gained my prayer.

XVIII

"Strange is thy story, stranger still
I must believe against my will.
Fain would I find some flaw to keep
Thee hidden in my dungeon deep;
But every word and sign and tone
Bespeak the truth and truth alone.
I knew that near the ocean's rim
Gurth had a brother like to him
As are two peas within a pod,
But never dreamed Italian sod
Would find him here. Thy sire's soul
Has passed beyond the earth's control.
Thy hapless father's race is run,
He perished when I saved the son."

GURTH

XIX

The day swift faded into night,
The Night hung out her lamps of light.
I watched them rise and pale, then came
The sun to set the world aflame,
Kindling with fire each spire of earth,
And still no word from absent Gurth.
Two lonely months were thus devoured,
While high the faithful watchers towered
Searching afar the wrinkled plane
For Norway's fleet but all in vain.
Each sail beheld, each spar and rope
Proved sad delusion to our hope.

XX

Meanwhile the mistress of the tower
Grew wayward — changing hour by hour —
Tears followed smiles and anger tears,
Triumphant joy succeeded fears ;
Her heart a harp whose strings were swept
By strange emotions memory kept.
I wondered did another find
Such April weather of the mind.
She led me once with gentle hand
To where arose a flower stand
Enriched with many blossoms rare.
And bade me choose the fairest there
To grace her wealth of hazel hair.

STORY AND SONG

I plucked a rose which seemed to speak
Of kinship to her red'ning cheek.
She bowed her shapely head with grace
For me to twine the bloom in place,
But senseless I, the flower gave
And straight was banished like a slave.
Sometimes my harp at her behest
Would wake a longing in her breast,
As I retold in Gallic song
Of faithless knight and maiden's wrong,
She strangely watched with eyes alight
As though I were the wicked knight.

XXI

I seemed a prisoner yet she gave
Me all the freedom I could crave.
Had she endowed with barge and boat
The proudest that on waters float
And said : " Thou hast supreme command."
I could not then have quit the land.
The strongest fetters captives feel
Are never wrought of hammered steel ;
An unseen thread may stronger keep
Than stoney dungeon dark deep.

XXII

When days had melted into weeks,
The roses faded from her cheeks :
Yet Gurth came not. My heart grew ill
To see my lady sad and still

GURTH

Then feverish grow when I came near
But why I knew not — 'twas not fear
That moved her so. At last one eve
The watchers on the tower receive
A sad reward ; beheld a barge
With some high chieftain in its charge,
Approaching slowly on the tide
Drop anchor near the castle's side.
The sails were furled, two score of rowers
Uplifted high their polished oars,
And then upon the vesper air
Arose a solemn chanted prayer
In Norway's tongue. My heart in fear
Beheld the sad procession near ;
Eight stalwart warriors strong and tall
Marched onward with a raven pall —
Black as the darkest Norway night
Hiding the very sun from sight.
The wild, weird cronach soon was o'er —
The column halted at the door
As if the dead beneath the pall
Would knock for entrance to the hall.
The mistress with a tearful eye —
Betwixt a shudder and a sigh —
Gave me her hand, a sign to say,
That I should lead the solemn way.
I swung the carven portal wide —
Then silent as if speech had died
Without a word, a sign or song
The black procession moved along :

STORY AND SONG

'Neath armor in the stately hall
They staid their steps : they set the pall.

XXIII

We knew 'twas he, yet silence fell,
Nor could we break the tragic spell
Which struck us dumb. At length a chief,
Whom I had known, spake some relief :
“ My tongue reluctant moves,” he said,
“ To tell the story of the dead —
A nobler, greater voice he needs
To breathe the glory of his deeds.
When viking Gurth approached with gold
To purchase peace the tale he told
Was disbelieved ; the erlking's wrath
Arose a tempest round his path
And named him traitor to the Norse,
Proclaimed with all his mighty force
The castle should be sacked. The king
Mistook the brothers, bade them bring
Ignoble fetters. And then Gurth
Appealing unto heaven and earth
Hurled back the traitorous word and lie.
We deemed that he was doomed to die.
“ O fair musician,” spake the king,
“ We know that thou canst harp and sing
Now we will judge if thou canst wield
With equal skill the sword and shield.”
With that he called upon his aides
For targes and a pair of blades.

GURTH

Then urged a kinsman of the king :
“It is unmeet you do this thing
A slight mischance, a fatal thrust
May turn an earlking into dust
And wreck our cause, as kinsman true
I beg to champion cause and you.
There lies my glove if he denies
That he is traitor, then he dies.”
Scarce had the gauntlet downward sank
Ere Gurth had snatched it from the plank,
And with a greater strength than grace
Hurled glove and challenge in his face.
Then Northern blood and Norway ire
Flamed upward like a living fire.
As lightning leaps upon his track
When Thor is raging fierce and black
So from the scabbards leaped the swords
Of these unconquered Norway lords.
Unrivalled skill and strength contend
Till none may prophesy the end ;
Each strove with seasoned hand to start
The life blood from a foeman’s heart.
Thus raged the duel three hours long
Between the warriors skilled and strong
Till mighty Gurth with giant’s leap
Rushed on and with a twisted sweep
Hurled high his foeman’s blade away
And heard it drop within the bay.
“Thy life is forfeit ! ” uttered Gurth,
“But since thou provedst a man of worth

STORY AND SONG

Thy Norseman's courage, strength and skill,
I'll never let my weapon kill."
Then spake the king: "Brave Gurth thine arm
Hath guarded thee from mortal harm.
The strongest swordsman of my fleet
Thou didst with lordly courage meet.
We will no longer war with thee —
We can no longer doubtful be —
Wilt thou abide by my right side
To be my champion and my guide?
Next to the king with skill and grace
We pray thee take thy rightful place.
Across the sea 'gainst Moslem foe
We wait thy choice to bid us go.
A single month of war or less
Will bring thee home thy home to bless."
Gurth wavered, and that moment cost
His life and all the world he lost!
He deemed our vessels anchored there
A menace to this lady fair.
Until the fleet had quit the shore
He dare not call the danger o'er.
Besides within his bosom lay
A love of battle's fierce array.
'Twas thus the royal wish prevailed
And Gurth as king's companion sailed,
Not doubting promised news was sent
To bring this lady's heart content.
What deeds he wrought, what chieftains fell
Beneath his sword I may not tell —

GURTH

The score is in the minds of men
Who saw him front the Scaracen."

XXIV

"Farewell ! brave Gurth, Valhalla's hall
Hath opened to thy spirit's call,
The gods of Odin, Frigga, Thor
Have witnessed all thy deeds of war.
'Twas thou who made thy heart a shield
To erlking on the battle-field,
And in thy bosom sheathed the lance
That flew to meet the king's advance.
Farewell! Thou man of highest worth,
Farewell! forever, noble Gurth."

XXV

He paused a moment, then he said:
"I leave thee, lady, with thy dead!
The gold he brought to purchase peace
Hath doubled by the swords increase;
This treasure and a priceless gem —
That graced a Kaliph's diadem —
Are given though they are but dross
If measured by your mighty loss.
Our king hath sent his vow by me
To never wage a war on thee."
Thrice bowed he down and then withdrew
Close followed by the sable crew.

STORY AND SONG

XXVI

When the setting sun was a shield of gold,
We buried him down by the sounding sea;
Where the murm'ring tide its stories told
Of the changeful tide of humanity.

Fronting the billows a monument stands
Which is carven deep with his name and worth
The casket is here, the soul in the hands
Of One who ruleth o'er heaven and earth.

XXVII

Long were the days and full of pain —
Hearts oft beating the same refrain.
And days were blended into weeks
Ere roses came to my lady's cheeks.
Then Spring began to wake the blooms
And bade them rise from lowly tombs,
And flowering shrub and trilling bird
Gladdened the eye and ear that heard.

XXVIII

Meanwhile my lady sought to teach
My lips to lisp her native speech,
And though the lesson hours were long
They seemed as fleeting as a song.
A dullard with tongue and pen
Must oft repeat the task again,
Sweet tasks they were, the volumes choice
That waked the murmur of her voice.



My harp long silent now became
A tongue for thoughts I dare not name.

GURTH

For I a double language learned
And treble was the treasure earned.
While searching quaint Italian books
I caught new meanings from her looks,
A furtive glance, a sigh, a word
The fondest hopes within me stirred.
My harp long silent now became
A tongue for thoughts I dare not name.

XXIX

Thus ran the year since Gurth was dead,
At last my lady gently said :
“ Thou art a nobler kind of Gurth
Like one new risen from the earth:
The form is Gurth's, the soul thine own
Bereft of all his harsher tone.
Within a finer spirit reigns
Washed clean of lawless crime and stains.
Whilest thou hast caught a tongue from me
My heart has been at school to thee.
Since first I knew thou wert not Gurth
I've learned to rightly weigh thy worth;
Here are my lands, my flocks and herds,
My bondsmen who obey my words
My castle with supreme command
I offer thee with heart and hand.”
Speechless I stood — no words were mine
To answer such a gift divine.
I knelt me down, I pressed her hands,
Accepted neither halls nor lands,

STORY AND SONG

Gave back the cattle on the plain,
The sceptre of her rightful reign :
“Thy love is all I seek,” I said ;
“I still will serve when we are wed.
While love supreme through longest life
Reigns o’er us both as man and wife.

KING EDGAR

ARGUMENT

Edgar the Peaceable, hearing that Elfrida, daughter of the earl of Devonshire, was very beautiful, sent his courtier, Athelwold, to verify the rumor; if true he was to propose marriage on the monarch's behalf. Struck by Elfrida's beauty Athelwold wedded her himself, and later reported that while wealthy her beauty was exaggerated. Doubting this report Edgar announced an early visit. In despair Athelwold begged his wife to appear in coarse attire with her beauty disguised. Elfrida at first consented but when the monarch arrived she approached with her radiant beauty enhanced by rich apparel and costly jewels. Seeing that Athelwold had deceived him the sovereign took Elfrida from him and made her queen. By this union Elfrida became the ancestress of nearly all subsequent sovereigns of England. This was Edgar's second marriage, his first was deemed by many unlawful. Soon after the wedding Athelwold was found dead.

PROLOGUE

'Twas spring-time in old England
Near a thousand years ago,
And roses red were blooming
As we joy to see them blow,

STORY AND SONG

The birds were praising sweetly
From the alder and the bay,
As we have heard them hymning
In the forests of today.

And hearts were full as human
As those that drumming beat
On floral brodered byways
Or on our crowded street.
For noble hearts and lowly,
The monarch on the throne
Are known to sense the passions
Akin to those we own.

For Love is still immortal
And sets the soul aglow
As once in merry England
A thousand years ago.
The hearts of man and maiden
Are tempest tossed today
As those of stormy Saxons
In cycles far away.

So you may read this story
In chronicles of old,
And faintly hear the echoes
In recent annals told :
For bowing low to beauty
With very latest breath
Man sounds the praise of woman
For whom he welcomes death.



But sad the sovereign.

KING EDGAR

I

Edgar, the peaceful, of great Alfred's line
Is sovereign of England north to the Tyne,
And west till waters of murmuring Dee
Are won by wooing and sighing of sea.
Here on its bosom the Saxon king rows
With royalest crew that history knows ;
Eight vassal monarchs threw scepters aside
And rowed the Peaceable over the tide.
So great his power, so mighty his reign,
Even the fiercest marauders of main
Never affronted ; his sinewy arm
Engirdled the Isle like magical charm :
Boldest of Northmen from Gallical raid
Sheered off from harbors of Edgar dismayed.
Valley and vale for abundant increase
Sounded the praise of the monarch of peace.

II

But sad the sovereign, while bringing to all
Richest of favors that heaven lets fall,
Thrice blessing his realm, found little of rest
For longing unnamed was gnawing his breast.
In watches of night and glamor of day
A face was present that would not away,
Face of a maiden where roses were born,
Yet fair as lily that opens at morn,
She seemed a phantom to vanish with night ;
When morning awoke she dazzled his sight.

STORY AND SONG

The lily and rose that gardened her face
Were mated and matched with marvelous grace.
Such was the vision confronting him there,
Though maids were many, surpassingly fair,
And thronging his court no beauty could boast
The features and form that seemed but a ghost;
Distraught the king who through shadow and sheen
Was seeking a wraith to crown her a queen.

III

The king called a courtier up to the throne
A wave of the hand and twain were alone —
Spake unto him : “ Lord Athelwold, thane,
Ever the friend of King Edgar remain ;
When questioned the stars gave answer to send
A lord a journey if he were a friend.
Thy friendship I’ve nursed since rising to power,
Of noble and knight thou seemest the flower.
Mid thousands to flatter ’tis sad the throne
Can never rest sure of friend of its own.
My brother be thou, yea closer than he,
For brothers oft covet scepters they see ;
Be simply my friend, this title I bring
The loftiest rank in gift of the king.
Friend Athelwold knows as none others do,
For oft I revealéd my soul unto you,
In darkness of night, in sunshine I’ve seen
Winsome one fair who is fitted to queen.
Last eve a friar with swelling acclaim,
Gave to my vision a palace and name ;

KING EDGAR

O'er earth he journeyed wherever there's sea
And came a-singing her praises to me,
Vowing the fairest in tower or town
Is maiden waiting on Devonshire down :
More marvelous still his wisdom can tell
The form and features I've painted so well.
Ere parted my lips astonished I hear
Of lily and rose, orbs open and clear,
Of tapering hand, a flower-like form
Lithe as willow yet defiant of storm,
Her tress a garment of golden sunshine,
Down falling, robing her figure confine,
And smiling o'er all beyond her control
Half hidden, half shown her beautiful soul.
The name of this peerless, dowerful girl,
Elfrida of Devon, heir to the earl,
Christened Elfrida, but beauty of heaven
Rechristened the maiden Lily of Devon.

IV

Friend Athelwold hear, the cares of the state
Have bound me to toil that cannot await
The king's a servant whom none ever asks
If he be weary the weight of his tasks ;
Though weary and worn I may not this hour
Seal to another the semblance of power :
Thousands stand ready to grapple the crown
If idly the king the bauble lay down.
Therefore, my lord, I implore thee to seek —
Though I might command, in friendship I speak —

STORY AND SONG

Speed thou to Devon, and on my behalf
With wisdom akin to cunning and craft
Lay to this Lily a seige of the heart ;
While screening the monarch, playing a part,
Deeply plumb nature though queenly her face
She may be unworthy the throne to grace,
May never own virtues rumor hath said
To give England kings when Edgar lies dead.
Thou wilt be wary while weighing her well
Before your mission more openly tell.
And thou wilt be faithful, faithful to death —
Safe guarding each gesture, wording and breath ?
From airiest nothings, frown or a sigh
Tenderest love is soon drooping to die;
Carry her jewels, this necklace and ring,
Which you may bestow as gifts of the king :
This hoop bears legend in symbol and sign
To prove high descent from Saracen line,
From Araby kaliph thro kaliph of Spain
It came to hand of le roy Charlemagne,
Then o'er the water to Egbert the king,
Sovereign of England, safe journeyed the ring.
It reads : " The owner to whom I come down
Will find me a seed to grow to a crown."
Keep it shall Devon or fairest or plain
Discrowned is the king asking gifts again.
In sending thee forth to woo me a wife,
I'm trusting a friend with more than my life,
For life swiftly flies, while trumpet of fame
May ever resound with honor and name.

KING EDGAR

With mine will be wedded, ever more seen
Name of the maiden I crown as a queen.
Once more be faithful, this Lily is mine
If rumor be true, if false call her thine."

V

Young was the morrow when lord rode away,
Monarch nor wooer would longer delay.
He hastened through day, at even he sped,
Staid him but little for victual or bed;
Stalwart the charger and steady and strong
That carried Athelwold gaily along.
Squire and servant were left far behind
For Athelwold rode with pace of the wind;
He saw no primrose that broidered the way
Nor noted hawthorns that scented the day,
Heard not the thrushes the lark sang in vain
As Athelwold galloped through forest and lane.
What recked he of songs or flowers though rare,
When Lily of Devon awaited him there.
Three days he journeyed and half of a night
Ere towers of Devon arose on his sight.
The sun in splendor was sinking to rest
Gilding a banner with Devonshire crest;
High waved the pennon from crown of tower
Defiantly boasting Devonshire's power.
Adown the drawbridge, what need they to fear,
No foeman was nigh, no danger anear.
Descended the ward; when Athelwold came
Announcing his station, ranking and fame,

STORY AND SONG

Portals flew open and Athelwold tall
Safeguarded entered the banqueting hall.
Far on the dais the courtier beheld
Masterful man who was wrinkled with eld,
Defying all seasons, wisdom and might
Burning in eyes that were flaming with light,
Hidden by brows that were shaggy and raven;
While snowiest locks and whisker unshaven
Were framing a face deeply engraven
With mystical signs from chisel of time,
Hinting at struggle and whispering crime,
While searching, groping for magical lore
Of Druid and mage of ages before.
And years of Devonshire's toiling and search
Had severed him far from bosom of church.
Trav'lers who journeyed in darkness of night
Saw from his tower a devious light
Streaming through blackness, while quivering air
Seemed to give echoes to groans of despair.
For wisdom he searched in passionate strife
To riddle at length the secret of life;
Seeking a weapon, or shield of defense
When angel of death should summon him hence.
And there on feature and marvelous form
Record was graven of study and storm.

VI

The usher announcing Athelwold's name
Gave voice to titles, fair station and fame.

KING EDGAR

“Welcome Lord Athelwold, welcome I bring
To him whose station is near to the king;
But if art hither for pleasure’s delight
My lord was surely misguided tonight.
Ancient the tower and gloomy the place
That shelters the last of Devonshire’s race.
He who is master of moorland and hall
Stands fronting the sea awaiting the call!
Fearlessly watches with touches of pride
For shadowy barge from over the tide,
Then out through harbor and on to the west
Orgar of Devon will hasten to rest.
But thou art welcome, ’tis spending the breath
To whisper an old man’s boding of death;
I only designed when put to the test,
To warn yet welcome to Devon a guest.”
The words spake welcome but manner and tone
Showed master content while dwelling alone;
With sepulchral voice potent to chill
Warmest of words and the welcome to kill.

VII

Though cold the welcome the courtier advanced,
Fearless of danger if danger there chanced,
Nor noble nor knight in England’s array
Was braver than he who journeyed that day.
The thane found supper the sewer had spread
Kinder than greetings the master had said,
And sav’ry dishes and generous wine
Caused earl and the lord to discourse incline.

STORY AND SONG

The first oft listened to annals well told
Of monarch and court by Lord Athelwold.
And pleased was courtier with Athelstane's might
In battle which filled a day and a night,
Where Orgar, the earl, while fronting a Dane
Was scarred in the face ere foeman was slain.
And late the hour ere master and guest
Turned thoughts aweary to couches of rest.

VIII

Athelwold guided by servitor old
Ascended the stairs, contented and bold,
He had met the earl and conquered in part
Deeper resentment hid in his heart.
But hardly he paced in uppermost hall
Ere vision appeared a heart to appall —
Appalling at first for rumor had told
Of magical art in Devonshire hold,
And surmise arose the lord of the tower
Was seeking to test his courage that hour,
Sending dark specters his guest to affright
While stalking to rest at nooning of night.
Afar in blackness of midnight there came
Shadowy maiden upholding a flame,
Hooded and robed in the hue of the night,
With tapering fingers only in sight,
Wierdly she glided a serpentine way
Chanting whilever a musical lay,
Hither and thither remeasured the hall,
Crooning and runing another to call.

KING EDGAR

Then out of nethermost part of the gloom
Answered a second and entered the room,
Black hooded and cloaked with taper of light,
Glided and measured from left unto right.
Then circled the twain with arms intertwined
With tapers aflame in move of the wind,
Their number increased as forward they aim
Full filling the hall with flickering flame,
While echoing aisles with music resound
Like murmuring ocean where grottoes abound,
In circles advancing, with sirenous din,
Screening and hiding a maiden within,
Whose figure tallest, whose rounded arms white,
Holding and swaying twin torches of light.
Unhooded was she, her bosom was bare,
While fallen, a robe, was marvelous hair ;
Of gold it seemed woven mingled with light
Such was the being that dazzled his sight !
He saw not her face, but partial her form
Yet was reminded of glorious morn.
When vanished the train, from sheltering niche
He groped through hallway in darkness of pitch.
And finding his room by servitor's light
Visions were wafted surpassingly bright.

IX

The sun was robing fair earth with his beams
Ere Athelwold rose from glorious dreams ;
Again was ushered to banqueting hall
Where Orgar of Devon awaited his call,

STORY AND SONG

Who gave him good morn and trusted that night
Had woven fair dreams till dawning of light.
Athelwold answered that visions more rare
Had never enchanted slumberer there,
Nor could he give o'er how e'er it might seem
That fairest beheld was more than a dream.
Lord Athelwold ceased for tongue must be still
When pictures enthrall and fetter the will,
All other senses are dumb with surprise,
And life is centered alone in the eyes.
The tapestry trembled, open it swung,
Revealing the cause that silenced his tongue.
Rarest of hangings enveiling the door
Enframed the maiden of even before ;
White as a lilly yet roses grew there
And reddened a cheek enchantingly fair.
On threshold she paused a moment and stood
Self-poised in the charm of sweet maidenhood;
Swiftly bewitching, alluring the soul
To yield the will to another's control,
She staid a moment, her footsteps advance
While Athelwold waked from out of a trance.
"The Lily of Devon, the last of our race,"
Spake the earl ; Athelwold greeted with grace.
The courtier was piqued that castle-bred girl
Though being the daughter of Orgar, the earl,
Should show by a smile the glance of her eye
Caused a king's courtier to stammer and sigh.
Fair ladies he knew, sweet maidens by score,
Yet none ever moved as this one before.



On threshold she paused a moment and stood
Self-poised in the charm of sweet maidenhood.

KING EDGAR

“ Ah father, Lily of Devon requests
The pleasure of welcoming hither thy guests,
And thou hast kept secret our castle did hold
Thane of King Edgar, the Lord Athelwold.”
“ Nay, daughter,” began her sire, with pride ;
“ ’Twas eve when Athelwold finished his ride.
Down was the day-star, the light of my bower
Had banished herself to shrine in the tower,
To robe as priestess in garments of white
And train her maidens in service aright.
’Twas unbecoming when guest did appear,
That I should disturb and summon her here ;
Trusting my lord would not vanish away
But wait a sunnier welcome to-day,
Hoping thy greeting would prove a sweet power
To bind a season in Devonshire tower.”

X

Lord Athelwold said : “ I’m doubly in debt
For richest of blessings heart ever met ;
Though hooded mine eyes, a heavenly voice
Would welcome me blind and bid me rejoice,
And were I but deaf the brightness I see
Would still be warmest of greetings to me :
With vision secure and hearing beside
I beg with Devon awhile to abide.
A gracious monarch hath granted thy guest
Some days to loiter as seemeth him best,
And I like miser, who searches for gold,
Would seek a treasure in Devonshire hold;

STORY AND SONG

The rumor hath flown to ends of the land
That power abides in Devonshire's hand;
That wisdom of Merlin, magic and power
Are known to the lord of Devonshire tower.
Like monarch perchance thou wilt grant to one
A ray of wisdom that hither hath run."

XI

"Lord Athelwold,thane, all rumors that fly
Of magical spells are naught but a lie.
Those sleeping in tombs breathe nothing of worth,
In flesh are bodied the fairies of earth;
No magic so mighty 'neath the blue sky
As written and hidden in fair woman's eye.
Wooing sweet wisdom, some secrets are mine;
In alchemy's fires some metals I fine.
Doubt not, my lord, there are words to be told
Turning base metals to richest of gold.
With coffers of gold ambition's a might
To raise a fair youth to giddiest height—
A hand is ambition heaven lets down
To lift the courageous up to a crown.
But lore of Merlin is learning of age,
Wisdom comes late at the uttermost page;
And now I am old, with wisdom sublime
I ne'er can hinder the scything of Time.
Spite of much treasure and something of lore
The days of Orgar are barely a score."

KING EDGAR

XII

“Father, forego,” urged the Devonshire heir.
“Preach never again such creed of despair;
Bright is the morning, no cloud in the sky,
’Tis sweet to be living, if destined to die.
I fear Lord Athelwold, hearing thy strain,
May call for charger and journey again.”
“Nay, Lady of Devon, thy sire’s sad word,
Though painful to hear, is oftenest heard.
The singer of morn lies silent at night,
Blossom of noontide falls fading with light,
Fairest of earthly in sunshine of God
May sleep to-morrow in couches of sod.
But deeper than wisdom the words ye say:
‘’Tis sweet to be living even a day,
And out in the sunshine breezes will bear
Far on their pinions the minions of care.’”

XIII

Lily of Devon and the Lord Athelwold
Passed out in the sunshine’s glitter and gold,
And dayshine faded ere Lily and thane
Re-entered the castle for shelter again.
But slow marched hours ere blessings of rest
Lighted on him who was Devonshire’s guest.
Nameless and dreadful forebodings besiege
A heart devoted to Edgar his liege.
Bright was the morrow when courtier arose,
Doubtful and fearful what eve would disclose.

STORY AND SONG

Again they wandered earth's beautiful room,
Where forests were gay with budding and bloom ;
Listened to carol and fluting of thrush
A-wooing a wife from blossoming bush ;
Hearing the brooklet race tuneful away
Through moorland and meadow down to the bay.
Lord Athelwold told of monarch and court,
His sovereign he praised in faithful report ;
Of noble and knight, of lady and squire,
Lily of Devon seemed never to tire.
This day's a copy of others that passed,
While stronger and stronger fetters were cast
That prisoned the courtier, weakened his power
To sever away from Devonshire flower.
Each night a courage and faithfulness grew
To vanish at morn like traces of dew.
Afar the Lily though fairest of fair
Grew doubly enchanting present to share
The sunshiny meadow, choirs and flowers,
Nature conspiring to heighten her powers.
One evening the moon was lending her light
To silver the forest, moorland and height,
While lord and lady together abide
Lulled by the chant of the murmuring tide.
Out o'er the deluge that billowing rolls,
Drifting and drifting together their souls ;
The cruelest moon, abusing her power,
Was binding with magic spirits that hour ;
And over the lord came wonderful peace,
Commanding all struggle to vanish and cease.

KING EDGAR

Old Ocean roared loudly, tauntingly said :
“ Courage, O courtier, is needed to wed.”
But into the hall crept specters of wrong
To battle with right till coming of dawn.

XIV

One morn spake courtier : “ Fair lady, I bring
These treasures of beauty, gifts of the king :
This jewel journeyed to heighten thy hand
And this thy bosom by royal command.
Now listen to madness, harken to me !
I offer my being and life unto thee ;
These also are baubles fame, fortune, and life
If maiden of Devon be never my wife.
Art silent, O Lily ? Thy heart oppressed
With longing unspoken, nameless unrest ?
You may be destined through dangerous love
To rise on a corse to station above.
Dreaming you may be of highest renown ;
Fate may be shaping your scepter and crown ;
Hidden the future, mine eyes fail to see
What Time is weaving fair Devon and me.
But once you declared the gauds of the crown
Are dust in the scales that love weighteth down.
I offer thee love with life and my name,
Yet nothing from thee can Athelwold claim.
While kneeling to woo I trust that your lips
The light of my hope and life will eclipse.
If Lily but say : ‘ Heart loveth thee not,’
In death shall glory of earth be forgot.

STORY AND SONG

On nethermost edge of being I stand
Awaiting a word, one sign of command;
No moan will I make, nor censure nor blame —
I love, and therefore can never complain;
Whatever thou givest, blessing or dole,
Receives the sanction of me and my soul.”
She paused a moment awaiting to fling
Rain from her eyes on the gift of the king,
Gave but a glance to the glittering band
Then to her lover her tapering hand.
He needed no word, nor signal, nor sign—
The smile that she lent was near the divine.

XV

Not lightly Athelwold yielded and fell,
He fought full often the mightiest spell,
Battled through hours of snail-footed night,
Yet meeting defeat with dawning of light.
He marshaled all forces captained by reason,
Plainly they pointed his pathway was treason,
But touch of the hand when moonlight lay still
Routed the reason and prisoned the will.
He strove for the king, but striving was vain;
His soul cried aloud at torture and pain.
In darkness he vowed the monarch must win,
Each motive for self was treacherous sin;
Let morning arise and maiden advance—
The king was unhorsed by Athelwold's lance.
What mortal should boast: “I never shall fail;
My virtues thrice clad in garments of mail,

K I N G E D G A R

Howe'er temptation is armored to ride,
I dare to battle whatever betide."
For many be true from birth till they die—
Save a vast treasure come temptingly nigh!
Thus a sheaf of days Time gathered away
Till Athelwold vowed no longer delay.
The morrow he pledged to saddle and ride
And beg the monarch the Lily for bride.
Musing he spake: "Ev'ry vassal must bring
All of his own to the feet of his king.
Bow to the monarch in struggle and strife,
Willingly yielding his fortune and life,
Flinging all things away, trampling them down,
Life, castles and lands for sake of the crown.
But heaven itself has dowered the soul
With rights surrendered to no man's control.
And the king 's a man—in joustings of love
Let victory fare to the favored above."
So to the master he hastily said,
As fearing resolve might weaken and ebb:
"Fate is surely unkind sending me here
With little of lore the aged to cheer.
Now on the morrow, at breaking of day,
I must leave my lord and hasten away.
Regretfully I my journey retrace,
And sadly I say: 'Farewell to your grace.'"

XVI

"Athelwold, pardon the man in the sire
Bidding thee stay when you wish to retire;

STORY AND SONG

Fate may be unkind, or frowning or fair,
But stars sent thee here to husband mine heir.
Nor couldst thou prevent. 'Twas woven in soul,
Transcending all bounds of human control.
How unraveled I this? Athelwold thane,
Never a volume was lettered as plain!
I count not the lore of magi of old
Save as you answer the prophecy told:
'When Devonshire race is centered in one
Great lord of the realm shall hitherward run.
From Winchester town a treasure he brings
To Devonshire heir, fair mother of kings.'
I know Lord Athelwold loveth my girl;
Her hand is studded with marvelous pearl.
The circle of gold in cunning design
Is gift prophetic to scion of mine.
Close drawn to Lily thou wilt not deny,
For lips of Athelwold scorneth a lie.
Behold how river is drawn to the sea;
Gaze now on flower alluring the bee;
Earth thirsty looks up and crieth aloud
Till heavens give down the milk of the cloud;
There are metals that tug the heart of a stone —
Think ye your lordship is standing alone!
Must river yield all its treasure to tide?
Must blossom grow sweets that bees may abide?
Must clouds send harvests o'er valley and plain
And you yield nothing? O, answer me, thane!
Why, even the stars, while lamping at night,
Are marshaled and led in marvelous flight.

KING EDGAR

Thy blossom she is, sea, starlight and earth,
Desired and longed for since moments of birth.
Shall Nature, who belted all things by power,
Be baffled and beaten in Devonshire tower?
Nay! while man is summit and crown of all,
He, too, though highest, is none but a thrall.
Name I the numberless claims of mine heir:
Virtue and beauty, the shine of her hair,
Her princely estates, the riches of keep,
To start Lord Athelwold out of his sleep!
With one step on the stair, claim as your own
Second, to bring you anigh to the throne.
With mine heir for spouse, my gold to allure,
You surely might even a crown secure;
Near to a king who unlawfully wed,
What hinders your reign when Edgar lies dead?
All numbered my days, mine hours are told
When outward I sail from Devonshire hold;
Ere vanishing I would dower the bride,
Who holds in herself all Devonshire pride.
This eve where moonlight illumines my bed
The daughter of Devon will wait you to wed."

XVII

Bright moon was rising o'er Alington height,
With courtier dreaming near nooning of night,
But clouds were marshaling far in the west
When servitor broke on Athelwold's rest.
Into his presence with torches aflame
Herald and warder to Athelwold came.

STORY AND SONG

They robed him in green, they darkened his eyes,
Naming the pleasure of gentle surprise.
Then out afield he was silently led
Till Druidical oak over him spread,
Giant of ages though storm after storm
Had tugged its branches and twisted its form.
Here Athelwold's eyes were given again
To see himself pent in circles of men,
Twelve circles, each man with symbol abreast
To mark a vassal of Devonshire crest.
And centermost there beheld them unfurl
Armorial banner of Devonshire's earl,
High waving o'er him, who drawing each breath
Was battling most fiercely demons of death.
Lord Athelwold heard rejoicing and song,
Eerily creeping on zephyrs along,
Stronger and louder far voices acclaim,
Mingling his own with Devonshire name;
While o'er the meadow in moonlight there came
Black robed procession with tapers aflame,
Gliding and weaving fair shadows of night,
With tapering fingers holding a light,
Encircling onward around and around
Lily of Devon with tresses unbound,
Enrobed in a gown, the hue of the sky,
Matching the blue in the deeps of her eye.
Thus forward moved they till under the wood
They girded around where Athelwold stood
Near to the Lily, whose bridal array
Created her fair as dawning of day.



Gliding and weaving fair shadows of night,
With tapering fingers holding a light.

KING EDGAR

Spake masterful man of Devonshire tower :
“I give her my lord, I give her with dower,
That runs with Torridge and races the Dart,
Exmoor and Dartmoor are parcel and part,
From Elfracombe Bay to Bigbury sands,
Tavistock, Tiverton hear our commands ;
Tavy and Teign ye may rightfully claim,
Treasure and castles of Devonshire name.”
In weakness paused he — the struggle severe —
Yet rising from couch resembling a bier,
Beckoned one forward, a being more eld,
Than e’er had eyes of the courtier beheld.
He towered aloft ’neath mistletoe bough,
With countenance calm, a wonderful brow
Deep rutted and wrinkled, written with years
Of study which banished longing and fears.
Snow is no whiter than vestments he wore,
Woven with signs of Druidical lore.
From sire to son his knowledge had run
Down from ages ere the Saxon begun.
Slowly to music like murmuring rain
With mystical rites he united the twain.
No cross of the church nor miter was there,
As Orgar was deemed a wizard of air.
Symbol of earth was man, maid of the sky,
Wed in purity with love from on high.
Yonder the ocean in anthem of song,
Yonder the forest the echoes prolong,
Above them the blue, beneath them lay spread
A rug of daisies, when Lily was wed.

STORY AND SONG

But ere from wedding they journeyed them back
The moon was shrouded with mantle of black.
Still home through meadow came blithely the train,
Joyously chanting a bridal refrain
Into the banqueting hallway, the groom
Proudly safe guarding his Devonshire bloom ;
And Dawn rose-tinted the sky in the east
Ere bride and the groom had quitted the feast.

XVIII

As they departed, shrill clarion call
Startled all inmates of tower and hall.
Unasked to Devon a messenger came
And summoned the groom in the sovereign's name :
" The king and nobles in knightly array
Await your lordship at Bigbury Bay.
Answers are vain—you must saddle and ride,
Away though it be from virginal bride."
The bride was in sorrow, the groom saw the sign ;
He pledged his love in a goblet of wine ;
Fondly he folded her form in embrace,
Lightly his lips touched the bloom in her face.
Then, vowing return ere close of the day,
He mounted his steed and galloped away.
He spared not the charger nor spur nor whip
Till seeing the haven girdling the ship,
Praying and urging the courser to bring
Master perplexed to the feet of the king,
A miser of moments hoarding the time
Though rider and horse were mottled with grime.

KING EDGAR

Warder was ready awaiting the thane
And ushered him in as slackened the rein.

XIX

“Lord Athelwold, thane,” said monarch who reigned,
“Hast ever the friend of Edgar remained,
Or art thou traitor with ravenest heart
Enmasking to play a villainous part?
A mission I gave; now bring me the truth,
For hope there’s little of shriving or ruth.”
Down sank Athelwold haggard and old,
And this to monarch most haltingly told :
“Sovereign, a child is unable to bear
Burdens an elder may toss in the air;
Unyielding, he seeks by tugging at length
To carry a weight surpassing his strength,
Knowing naught of weakness till end of test—
May die in struggle at sire’s behest.
A child kneels lowly, O Sovereign of State,
To tell of burden he fears was too great.
Like youth he ventured till waters above
Have sunken him deep in ocean of love.
Thou sentest me forth a burden to bring—
To judge if maiden be fit for the king,
Labor far greater than ever my power—
Tastes differ, my king, as flower from flower.
What pleasures one sight brings pain to another,
What nourishes me may weaken a brother,
What is fair to eye of vassal may bring
Not delight, but loathing, when seen by king.

STORY AND SONG

Sweet music, to some, is honey of joys ;
To those discordant, it wholly annoys.
Beauty herself is a creature of minds —
Outer is only what inner one finds,
A shading of hair, a curve of a line
Makes homely to one, to others divine.
Great nations have passed and monarchs have died
For beauties others could hardly abide.
Broaden a feature or slender it down,
Queen Beauty is reft of scepter and crown;
Change but a hair-breadth, though nothing it harms,
The Fairy hath fled with magical charms.
How, then, could I vow the Devonshire maid —
Though fair in mine eyes and virtue-arrayed —
Could fill the orbs of my king with delight
Had I dared to present her fore him to-night ?
Though lighting my hall, her beauty might shine
With little luster in palace like thine;
Her hair may ensnare a courtier, I vow,
But never enmesh great monarch as thou.
True, she hath gold and vast treasure at hand —
These if thou deignest are thine to command.
So starry the height is majesty seen,
Only the royal seems fitted to queen ;
Then why should mightiest monarch of earth
Husband a maiden less royal of birth ?
In France dwells princess of Charlemagne's line,
And one waits wooer o'er waters of Rhine ;
Choose thou among kindred, king from a king,
From royalest blood let mightiest spring,

KING EDGAR

And leave to thy vassal, who offers his life,
Devonshire maid he hath taken to wife."

XX

"What said Lord Athelwold! say not again!
That thou art falsest 'mong races of men,
Even have dared in Devonshire tower
To rival thy king and mate with his flower.
Surely you saw in some feature, her eyes,
Traces of beauty, then grasped at the prize.
Thine orbs were not thine, all visions were mine;
For me they beheld her beauty ashine—
Thine eyes but mirrors to mirror to me
Feature and form that they seemed but to see.
If your ear caught notes of caroling voice,
'Twas justice that I alone should rejoice.
If you touched for self such touches defile,
All mine the harvest of blessing and smile.
The love you sensed in your innermost part
Was woven of throbs that beat in my heart.
Stark naked you stand—no shield of defense—
For monarch was I of every sense.
As you rob me of heaven, blessing thyself,
Why prate of the theft of paltrier pelf?
Why mention the dross when deeps of your soul,
Emotions and thoughts, were mine to control?
My presence depart, swift fleeting the hours
Till meeting again in Devonshire towers."

XXI

Lord Athelwold raced as racer for life
Till, seated beside his beautiful wife,
Spake to the Lily: "The King of the Isle
Comes hither, lady, to tarry awhile.
And if 'twill please you to humor me now,
I pray you darken your snowy-hued brow,
Banish the roses abloom in your face,
Your bosom with coarsest fustian enlace,
These wonderful locks unrivaled by peer
I beg most swiftly you harvest with shear,
With pigments of brown your fairness efface
And mask a season your willowy grace."
"My lord," said the Lily, "pray thee explain.
Why darken my brow, and roses unstain?
Has innocent hair been guilty of treason,
To perish at once without rhyme or reason?
Why, even a hind feels pleasure and pride
In grace that arrays his virginal bride.
What crime is so base that in the king's eyes
I must amble a drudge in sloven's disguise?
'Tis said sweet beauty is scepter and power;
Must I cast her off in Devonshire tower?"
"True beauty enchants," said Lord Athelwold,
"But graces of mind are the anchors that hold;
Virtue enfetters when beauty is gone,
Which vanishes oft twixt twilight and dawn.
But, lady, time urges; I bow unto thee
And pray you garner your beauty for me,

KING EDGAR

For even the king may yield to thy charm
And bring upon spouse the deadliest harm.
Fair Lily, recall the pearl on your hand
Was hitherward borne at monarch's command;
And seeing thee fair, as fair as thou art,
May follow this gift with gift of his heart.
If other should woo—one greater than I—
How then would Lily of Devon reply?"
"I would say to king, that I am a wife,
Holding honor and name dearer than life.
Since danger, you deem, approaches the tower
I'll hie me away to rose-hidden bower,
And maidens may there with murderous skill
All of my beauty most cruelly kill."

XXII

Lord Athelwold waited, weary and worn—
Anxiously waited the sound of a horn;
He tarried not long till seneschal came
With word to make ready in sovereign's name.
"The king is nearing, the bright retinue
Is hardly a league from Devonshire view."
Meanwhile in blossoming rose-burdened bower
The fairest of England was weeping that hour;
With her sweet maidens were mingling their tears
Ere beautiful locks were slain by the shears.
They fondly caressed silk fibers of gold
As misers caress the treasures they hold.
Anear came a knight, who lighted to ground,
Beholding amazed such tresses unbound.

STORY AND SONG

So sadly she wept he prayed her to speak
The sorrowful cause that showered her cheek.
Lily of Devon, twixt sobbing and sigh,
To stranger betrayed why beauty must die.
Reasoned the rider: "Is beauty a curse,
Ivy to banish or blossom to nurse?
Surely your spouse should well ponder again
Ere banning for all this fairness from men.
The king hath gold to do as he please
But where is the mart for features like these?
If priced a kingdom, a scepter and throne,
He might barter them all for tresses alone.
I pray, fair lady, thy purpose give o'er,
Destroy not blessings that none can restore.
Near am I to king, who cometh the hour
To rest a season in Devonshire tower,
And pledge thee his faith by sainted above
He journeys alone on mission of love—
Love holy and pure as maiden heart feels
Bowed at communion, she worshiping kneels.
I beg, I command, an hour of time
Ere finger dares move to traitorous crime."
He mounted his steed and loosing the rein
Rode swiftly to lead the sovereign's train.
Ere ever the sands marked flight of an hour
Monarch and retinue entered the tower.

XXIII

Spake sovereign to thane: "If heaven be just
How couldst thou destroy all traces of trust,

KING EDGAR

Trample on friendship, thy monarch disdain
By touch unholy and longings profane?
'Tis treason unpardon'd to think of the queen,
And she was sovereign though never yet seen;
Round her the banner, the buckler, and sword
Of England's monarch, thy masterful lord."

Athelwold answered: "My lips touched her cheek,
Bringing me heaven that heareth me speak,
And swear the Lily of Devon's as pure
As when hither I rode her hand to secure.
But if thinking, dread king, be treason vile,
I pray you prison the Lily's sweet smile;
Else wherever seen, or saddened or gay,
Treason will follow as certain as day.
But now the Lily's as perfect a flower
As any abloom in paradise bower.
Scarce wedded were we ere entered the hall
Thy messenger warm with summoning call,
Commanding that I should saddle and ride
The instant I heard, whatever betide.
One moment I folded the Lily in arms
Then away, away from virginal charms.
If king deign enter a tourney with me
We'll wait decision whose spouse she will be.
By all that I am, or should be, I swear
She's never my wife till so she declare.
St. Dunstan is near to swiftly enforce
A judgment you hear decreeing divorce.
E'en this perchance is unneeded to shore
Marriage of twain by Druidical lore.

STORY AND SONG

Again let her choose the king on the throne
Or knight who offers affection alone.”
Consented the king to Athelwold’s word,
And soon the judgment of Dunstan was heard.

XXIV

The Lily was summoned; tapestried hall
Gave way as she entered, graceful and tall;
No pigment was there her fairness to brown;
In waves her tresses rolled shiningly down,
A ribbon of snow the golden locks bound
Looping a measure from touch of the ground.
Noblest of maidens and haughty dames proud
Gave space to vision that parted the crowd.
Stately she glided in garments of white
Nor glanced to the left nor yet to the right,
Journeyed straight onward toward monarch and thane,
The gallants of England forming a lane;
Courageous in heart but rose-color failed,
Seeing how Athelwold suddenly paled,
Then crimsoned her face as knight of the bower
Rose high o’er highest, the monarch of power.
At foot of the dais adaze with surprise
A minute she paused and lowered her eyes,
Till king held her hand with courtliest grace
And gallantly throned her next to his place.

XXV

“Fair lady and judge,” the royal voice said
While silence brooded like living were dead,

KING EDGAR

“In fairy-land kingdom where heaven weds earth
There bloomed a flower of infinite worth :
Only one blossom like this one abloom,
With it the king sought to garnish his room.
Fair flowers he knew, exceedingly rare,
But this the fairest — surpassingly fair.
But being weighed down by burdensome power,
Unable himself to ride for the flower,
Sent servant instead, and calling him friend
Besought him that he would faithfulness lend,
To ride a journey till blossom so bright
Should burst on orbs as to dazzle their sight.
Servant went forward until he did find
The beautiful bloom the king had in mind ;
But scorning the crown, disdainful of power,
He wickedly plotted theft of the flower.
Impious fingers forgetful of chief,
Touched petal and stem and marvelous leaf ;
His breath drank fragrance belonging to king,
Soon would the flower have quit blossoming.
These rumors ran rife to end of the land,
And servant was summoned by royal command,
Then out of base lips by might of his power
He wrung confession concerning the flower.
Unsatisfied then ; for never again
Will he own rich faith in friendship of men ;
Breeding suspicion, he hastened away
To ride to that land as fast as he may ;
Arriving aright at fairy-land bower,
Saw with amazement that wonderful flower.

STORY AND SONG

While yearning to seize and save its perfume,
Beauty and brightness to heighten his room,
He doffs a season majestic power,
Yielding a throne to that beautiful flower.
Fearing the blossom might wither and die
If secret longing the king should defy—
Though rightfully his, all rights he resigns
To ask the blossom which way it inclines,
And vows by the cup Sir Galahad saw
To sanction its choice by might of the law.
Ere blossom shall aught of decision declare,
The king would secret most willingly share.
Through marches of days and midnight's lone hours,
In visions he saw this fairest of flowers;
The visions confirmed by rumors that came
To dower the flower with bower and name,
Since monarch has come and monarch has seen
Would make of blossom a spouse and a queen.
He loved it afar, and now it is near
In flood-tides of love 'tis treble as dear.
Thus quitting the throne, and bowing him down,
He offers this blossom love and a crown."

XXVI

The monarch bent low, and Athelwold knelt,
Not lifting sad eyes for glances he felt,
Spake never a word, excuse he had none
Save love led onward to all he had done.
She paused some moments, full deeply her sigh,
While tears fell waiting a husband's reply;

KING EDGAR

She knew Love was blind, alas! was he dumb,
Or did danger appall and silence the tongue?
"O Sovereign of State," breathed Devon at last,
"The days of my wooing forever are past,
For I am a wife, my husband kneels there
Whose woe and welfare I'm plighted to share."
Said monarch with frown: "Two lovers kneel down,
Choose thou the vassal or monarch with crown.
Thine husband that was hath put to the test
The claim that Devon still loveth him best;
Hath sworn by himself thy choice to abide
Ere ever again he claims thee as bride."
Ah, then, did Lily of Devon divine
Why husband forebore a word or a sign;
Facing a monarch he may not defy
Though ready and willing in battle to die.
Love tugged at her heart but him she resigned
To follow the path to safety inclined;
She sacrificed life to ransom a life
By yielding herself to the monarch as wife.
Then Devon began: "Be it evermore known
I loved him, O king, more than scepter and throne.
But thou art monarch, by Monarch above
Sent hither to rule our life and our love.
To my sovereign I yield: let memory keep
Love's fragrance till death shall woo me to sleep.
All, all that I am to thee I resign,
And pray thee sweet mercy for him that was mine.
May it never be said Edgar did bring
Vengeance on him who dared rival the king.

STORY AND SONG

As God hath kept me in virtue serene
So shall I be faithful as wife and a queen."
She raised the monarch by sign of command
And gave to his own her lily-hued hand.

EPILOGUE

EPILOGUE

Again sweet Spring has whispered
 To blossoms underground,
Again the buds are bursting
 With mystery profound:
A woman stands a-weeping
 Enwrapt in growing gloom,
And drops a sheaf of lilies
 Upon a lowly tomb.

Her stature fair and stately,
 Her roses rich and rare,
But crowning all her beauty
 Is the glory of her hair.
She singly drops the blossoms
 And with each bloom a tear
For him who died at Devon,
 While royal pair was near.

In vain a monarch's mercy
 Gave pledge to queenly wife,
In vain the tears of Devon
 To call him back to life.
While golden orb was sinking
 His spirit sadly fled,
The very day the Lily
 The peaceful monarch wed.

STORY AND SONG

Not all the glare and glitter
 Encompassing a throne,
Can woo away the hunger
 Of human heart alone;
And queen may be as lonely
 As any widowed dove,
And mourn herself a widow
 By the sepulcher of love.

THE CENTURY

THE CENTURY

Read before the Progress Circle New Years Eve,
1900.

Open your ponderous portals, O Time !
Oh, open your gates to a cycle sublime —
Open them swiftly, for the races of men
Are awaiting thy signal ere marching again.
Legions are pausing 'twixt the old and the new,
While the pageant of years sweeps by in review.
A century past, and the babe of that day
Is drowsily dreaming the moments away ;
He awakens in youth pondering a dream
Of the marvelous light beginning to gleam :
In manhood, a giant, with sinewy brawn
To wrestle Dame Nature till coming of dawn ;
All night is the battle ; when darkness is past,
The Dame gives her scion a blessing at last.
Now wrinkled and grizzled, a hundred years old,
He totters and halts, while his triumphs are told ;
Smiles proudly and cries, as a conqueror ought :
“ Behold, O my children, the wonders I wrought !
My creatures belch fire through the watches of night,
And carry you swift as an eagle in flight ;
I have shrunk the earth till oceans are lakes ;
I catch every cry that humanity makes ;
Over mountainous heights and under the sea
Run nerves of the world till they center in me ;

STORY AND SONG

A touch of the wire and I banish the gloom;
I hear voices afar as if in the room,
And even my dead, as they sleep in the tomb,
Still speak to the quick as though buried too soon :
Through wireless air mystic messages come ;
In depths of the deep my leviathans run ;
Vast islands I formed of a continent grand,
And the seas went marrying at my command ;
On the shoreless, the treacherous air I float
And laugh at the wind waves that threaten my boat.
With the lightning my thrall three kingdoms I own :
Earth and water and air acknowledge my throne.
I have pictured the heart still throbbing with pain,
But the soul — ah, the soul ! — I 've hunted in vain.
I have mastered the cipher graven on stone
By the finger of God, and humbly I own
I plumb with amazement the deeps of His plan
In launching the earth as a vessel for man,
Enlading her deeply with iron and coal,
Seaming the mountains with His silver and gold,
Fringing the rivers with the whispering wood,
And sowing the valley with spices and food,
O'er-spreading our room with a magical loom
And tinting the pattern with beauty of bloom,
Then placing His children abroad in their prime,
They start on a voyage supremely sublime :
On etherial sea, afloat in a ship
And sailing a marvelous, measureless trip,
With a meteor's speed 'twixt Venus and Mars,
Earth runneth a race on the track of the stars.

THE CENTURY

“Small wonder that he who hath conquered this ball,
Who hath reached to the stars and measured them all,
Who hath creatures to sing, to speak and to nod,
Claims kinship anear to the infinite God!

“But I humble myself when weighing the crime—
Oh the sorrow and shame that men say are mine,
And the lowly and poor, who starving and cold,
See the coffers of wealth, o’erflowing with gold;
And I sigh with remorse as memory shows
That I am a century cycle of woes.
The war drums still throbbing and murder again,
Is redd’ning the earth with the blood of the slain;
I tremble to think that the Father above
Hath never repealed His commandment to love;
And marvel to know the foremost in worth
Are foremost in slaying their brothers of earth.”

Thus speaketh the century dying to-night,
So boastful yet humble, so wrongful yet right.
The mightiest wizard of centuries eld,
The wisest magician Time ever beheld;
Yet we who are watching his ultimate breath
Feel neither a pang nor regret at his death.
We are glad the past will be buried at last,
Though mighty the drama and splendid the cast.
We are children of light, and, facing the dawn,
Are waiting the word to march onward and on,
Faithfully trusting there are triumphs in store
Greater and grander than this century bore.

STORY AND SONG

Neither prophet am I, nor even the son
Of prophetic sire; yet over me come
Fair visions of brightness that shine as the sun,
Engilding earth's shadows with magical beam,
And painting the future a rose-colored dream.
So happy are people that praises of men
Discourage all language and baffle my pen.
Words! words are as ashes disguising a fire,
Or clothing a goddess in beggar's attire.
But joyous the planet with joys from above,
For the Spirit of Good broods earth as a dove;
War's music is ended; the music of praise
Now lightens and sweetens the labor of days!
Gaunt famine has vanished; no more is it said
The children beg vainly a mother for bread;
There's daily a banquet to ends of the earth,
Where the highest give place to the lowly of birth;
The poorest are rich, and the richest content,
When labor and harvest are equally sent.
God's velvety tapestry, woven for earth,
Grows fairer with flowers of infinite worth —
There the children who delved are joyously heard
To rival the music of caroling bird.
No doorways are barred, no one seeketh by stealth,
For each hath enough, and enough meaneth wealth.
Fair cities are rising, surpassingly grand;
Neither palace nor hut is marring the land;
No hungry nor homeless is thronging the street,
No maiden is sold for a morsel to eat;

THE CENTURY

Hearts harder than iron were melted and ran
To succor the vestal and sorrowful man ;
Harsh Levite and prelate departed, and then
A nation was born of Samaritan men.
Diseases are passing, for worry and dread
Are harvesters fierce in the field of the dead ;
Even death is delayed ; an angel of bliss
He cometh when age is aweary of this ;
And lifts in his arms and soothes with his hand,
And gently transports to a neighboring land.
Dame Nature is harnessed now, willing to yield,
As the drudge of the shop, the household and field ;
Skillful creatures man-made are tilling the sod,
While genie of all is co-worker with God,
In highest of wisdom is tracing his plan
In making this planet a heaven for man.

Think ye a century is too brief a time
For man to enjoy such a vision sublime ?
Must the race still plod on through error and tears
And suffer in shame for unlimited years ?
I say to you : Nay ; we are garnering power,
Like a century plant that blooms in an hour,
Or as comets out of the infinite run,
For eons of ages, approaching the sun,
When nearing God's taper their marvelous flight
Grows swifter and swifter, till speeding like light,
After rounding their goal they measure their pace
Like charger that cools, after winning a race.

STORY AND SONG

For numberless years, out of folly and crime
Humanity's race has been learning to climb;
So painful its progress, so slothful at first,
Now faster and faster, as greater the thirst
For wisdom that serves; we are rounding the goal
To brotherhood vast of which God is the soul.
Our mother is rich; 't is the fault of some child
Who is cruel, relentless, savage and wild;
'T is he who has minted the hearts and the tears
Of lowlier brothers through measureless years;
Persuade him to justice, the world stands redeemed,
And ready for visions a dreamer hath dreamed.
Now open, O Time, your double-leaved gate—
Oh, hasten, your children impatiently wait—
Let enter the light and fair wisdom sublime,
Turn backward avarice, passion and crime;
Inviting sweet peace and bright progress within,
Bar forever the wars, diseases and sin;
Forbidding the wrongful with falsehood's foul stain,
Crown Honor and Right fair sovereigns to reign.

The hammer is trembling, so eager to fall!
When earth shall fly on like swift cannon-ball;
No moment is wanting: now cometh the morn.
Harken! behold ye! the Century's born.

CALIFORNIA'S GREETING

CALIFORNIA'S GREETING AT THE WORLD'S FAIR

From home beside Balboa's sea
I bring sweet greetings, sisters fair,
And prayers that ye will pardon me,
If I your honors seek to share.

Columbia brave, thy daughters all
Are sovereigns, yet to thee we bow,
And ask that as a blessing fall
This golden chaplet on thy brow.

And other rulers of the world
Are sending here a countless fleet,
With every royal flag unfurled
To pour earth's treasures at thy feet.

With one accord and modest worth,
With warmest heart and open hand,
We bid the nations of the earth
Thrice welcome to our favored land.

Let every island of the sea,
Let every land beneath the sun,
Hear welcome now as full and free
As rendered since the world begun.

Bring all the garnered fruits of toil,
Bear hither all you treasure most :

STORY AND SONG

Old Father Time, I bid you spoil
Of everything that makes him boast.

* * *

I know the worth of young and old
In this fair sisterhood of state,
Yet pray you deem me none too bold
If I my partial claims relate.

I pledge you in this golden cup—
A gift from one of countless mines—
And quaff a nectar gods might sup,
The earnest of unnumbered vines.

Broad fields of wheat and orchard deep
Extend o'er valley, hill and plain;
While orange bloom with sweet perfume
Makes zephyrs sigh to come again.

I cannot paint my gorgeous skies,
Nor trace the constant glow and gleam,
Where Nature revels and defies
The painter in his wildest dream.

Yosemite ! supremely grand,
Thy poet true is yet unborn
To picture with a master hand
Thy glories on a vernal morn.

For mortals stand in wondering awe
And know all living tongues must fail

CALIFORNIA'S GREETING

If, madness lured, they seek to draw
The peerless falls of Bridal Veil.

Where granite mountains upward creep
Till, Babel built, they touch the sky;
And waters sweep in mighty leap
To Mirror Lake, there calmly lie.

This jewel gleaming on my breast,
Encircled by a rim of snow
Asleep on giant mountain crest,
Reflects the charms of Lake Tahoe.

Mt. Wilson's brow is wreathed with snow,
His foot is shod in olive green,
While mimic snow of orange blow
Crowns every vale and valley seen.

Your sun is hidden by the west,
Mine lingers o'er the Golden Gate
To kiss the maids he loveth best
While other lands his beams await.

* * *

I crave your pardon if you think
I speak with boldness nearly rude,
And seek to show you many a link
That drew me to your sisterhood.

For centuries asleep I lay,
And seemed but only half awake,

STORY AND SONG

When near my San Francisco Bay
I heard the guns of Francis Drake.

Soon after, when the Fathers came
And taught my wayward children well,
I could not all my senses claim
But in a dreamland seemed to dwell.

For such the peaceful life they led
With flocks and herds on plain and hill,
I did not rouse me from my bed
Nor feel my senses throb and thrill.

Then rumor ran of coming strife,
My heart became a warmer font,
And I arose to stranger life
To clasp the hand of brave Fremont.

A grander stride of joy and pain
I marched when in my mountains old,
As yellow veins were rent in twain
Ran freely with my virgin gold.

Deep in my rocky vaults I kept
The treasures that in later years
Enriched the world as o'er me crept
The brave and hardy pioneers.

I pray you just a moment stay,
And sweep from mem'ry all the rest,
For all I have must homage pay
To Native Daughters of the West.

CALIFORNIA'S GREETING

These peerless prizes of my State
Unrivalled rank where waters run;
And each will hardly find a mate
Save mated to a Native Son.

* * *

Consider, too, the bounds I own
To make me proud among the great—
While riches hitherto unknown
Have christened me the Golden State.

Bold Shasta lifts his pond'rous shield
Along my northern line to guard,
While eastward as on battle field
Nevada's giants watch and ward.

A canyon vast, a desert wide
Keep well my southern boundary,
And Neptune with his grandest tide
To westward boweth down to me.

A million million pennant pine
Rise armed a lance from out the sod,
To keep these virgin charms of mine
For men who only feared their God.

* * *

I own no wish your sight to blind
With jewels rare and golden fruit;
I value these, yet bear in mind
My proudest triumphs are of truth.

STORY AND SONG

The torch Prometheus lit on high,
Here brightly beams on mountain peak,
As Barnard meets the starry sky
In merry game of hide-and-seek.

His stellar friends he names by name,
And with his powers yet abloom
Has won himself a mighty fame
By finding Jove a hidden moon.

I shall not try your patience kind
Recounting all the wealth I hold —
Come, come to me and you will find
One-half my charms are still untold.

O voice of river, rill and lake!
Join in the anthem of the sea
And every sound in nature wake
To chant thy praise Oh Liberty!

TO MY MOTHER

TO MY MOTHER—HER 77TH BIRTHDAY

They say another year has fled
And you should seem some older,
More white upon your honored head
Your pulse a trifle colder.
They claim that Father Time should set
Some hieroglyphic letter,
And spell with his quaint alphabet
The years that you are debtor.

But as we search your gracious face
No recent lines are graven,
No needless snow has come to grace
The locks that still are raven.
Your step is like a woman's prime,
Your laugh as light as ever,
Have you then made a league with Time
To be your friend forever?

Has he whose touch brings frequent grief,
Whose signs foretell a sorrow,
Agreed to grant you sweet relief
On each returning morrow?
Whate'er the secret of thy youth
Our gladness we are voicing—
These lines but echo back the truth
Of hearts that throb rejoicing.

STORY AND SONG

But we believe the kindness shown
To children and to neighbor
Has now a golden harvest grown
Of blessings for your labor.
Your tender charity and love
To mortals freely given
Have fruited as a tree above
In joys akin to heaven.

For what we sow we also reap,
Both here and the hereafter,
And you, while many sow to weep,
Have sown for love and laughter,
You scattered seeds of joy for all
And knew not you were sowing,
But One, who notes a sparrow's fall,
Has watched your harvest growing.

'Tis this that kept the raven hue
While younger locks grew whiter,
And brought a bounding pulse to you
And made your eyes the brighter.
'Tis this that kept your heart so light;
For life is like a mirror
That sendeth smiles for smiling bright,
And love for loving dearer.

For ever thus the living thought
Weaves faces fair or homely---
They're sweet if we have rightly wrought
And sad if we are lonely.

TO MY MOTHER

And though the cloudlets now and then
Robbed hours of joy and gladness ;
The sun arose, and you again
Felt just a touch of sadness.

And now, O Time, as on you run
Be constant in your giving
Sweet smiles unto our loving one
And keep her with the living.
For this your children pray for you
And while we kneel confessing,
That underneath the arching blue
Thou art our greatest blessing.

A benizen from heaven above
For which deep thanks are owing,
To lead us on by deeds of love
The way that thou art going ;
To ever lead till we are through
With earth and all its favors,
And joined again in heaven with you
Surrounded by your neighbors.

STORY AND SONG

THE BEHYMER LIBRARY

Heaven bless the man who rears the family dome;
Heaven bless the wife whose virtues make it home;
May blessings fall again when by their care
A world of wisdom hath assembled there.
Behold famed poets, bards of every age,
The work of genius bright'ning many a page,
And brave romance, the drama grave and gay
In order stand their treasure to display.
These are the rulers of a changeful world;
Great kings are nameless dust, their empires hurled
Into oblivion; but Homer blind
Still leads; great Plato, monarch of the mind,
Is reigning king, his barefoot teacher's word
Searching for truth around the sphere is heard.
Here Fancy lures us through the fairest field
To see King Arthur armed with lance and shield;
Hear his weapon clang, sense the rocking ground
The rush of steeds and watch the victor crowned,
Another scene—sweet Freedom marches on
With bleeding feet from bloody Marathon.
Then hosts of martyrs crowding swiftly by
We close our eyes lest we behold them die.
Oh, babbling books! oh, volumes deep profound!
Ye prove the world is naught but hallowed ground
Filled with the ashes of the mighty past
That died to save us from the grave at last.
Eternal spirits here ye still abide
To aid, to comfort and our lives to guide.

K O K I N A

KOKINA

Kokina, the fair, was a maiden
Dwelling by the Yellow Sea,
Where breezes with whispers were laden
Foretelling of trials to be.

So plaintive they carried the warning
Resembling a siren's song,
Enchanting the heart in the morning,
Luring the bold and the strong.

Adown in the cradle of ocean
Sailors are lying asleep,
Bereft of all life and emotion,
Lured to a tomb in the deep.

So ever the zephyrs were bringing
Warning Kokina, the fair :
“ When the sea-god cometh a-singing
O Kooshi maiden, beware.”

But Kokina laughed at the warnings,
Fearless forever, the vain,
And answered the breezes with scorings—
Welcomed the god of the main.

Kokina was pure as a flower,
Fair as a goddess above,

STORY AND SONG

But proud of her beauty and power—
Thinking the god was in love.

But mortals should ever remember—
Maidens though jewels of worth,
To the sea-god seeming so tender
Are objects only of mirth.

His love is so icy and chilling,
Killing while clasping to hold,
Deceiving all maids who are willing
With tales of palace of gold.

Kokina was wooed by a lover,
Baron of noble estate,
Though ranking in name above her
Yet sought the maiden as mate.

But waving aside his advances—
Facing the deluge of brine—
She answered with ravishing glances:
“Old Ocean’s a rival of thine.

“I tossed to the billows a jewel—
An opal with golden rim—
Now Ocean so charmingly cruel
Vows I am plighted to him.

“And ever the breezes are bringing,
Winging a message to me,
Are swaying and chanting and singing:
‘Thou art the bride of the sea.’

KOKINA

“And answering back to old Ocean
Whispering lips as I nod :
‘O never doubt maiden’s devotion,
When one is wooed by a god.’ ”

Her lover, o’erwhelmed by the terror,
Prayed to Kokina to flee —
Foretelling how fatal the error
Plighting herself to the sea.

“Kokina, beware the immortal,
Blasting the soul with his breath —
His touches but open the portal
Leading to regions of death.”

She smiled at forebodings, replying :
“When I give over this life,
If thou art no coward at dying
We ’ll die as husband and wife.

“Prepare then to follow me ever
E’en down to caverns of sea —
The monarch shall sever us never,
If thou my husband will be.

“The moon waxes full on the morrow—
When silvering earth again,
I’ll wed thee for joy and for sorrow—
Jilting the god of the main.”

Kokina was wed in the ev’ning
In garments hue of the sky —

STORY AND SONG

Her lover stood by half believing
His time was nearing to die.

The guests had departed, and weary
Kokina happy and blest,
With a husband loving her dearly
Sank to an innocent rest.

But scarcely an hour of slumber,
Ere hearing the ocean's boom,
A roaring like billows of thunder,
Rousing the bride and the groom.

The castle was mightily shaken,
And unprotected the twain
Stood facing, by mortals forsaken,
The cruel god of the main.

He towered aloft to the ceiling
As if disdaining the sod,
While lightnings played round him, revealing
The frowning face of the god.

And out of the darkness amazing
The wedded beheld the ring,
With the opal evilly blazing
Gilding the hand of the king.

A voice that was far more appalling
Than even the angry tide
Came out of the blackness; a-calling:
"Kokina, Kooshi, my bride!"

K O K I N A

The wail of that wonderful singing,
Seeming a soul sorely tried,
Rang eerily, mournfully bringing :
“Kokina, Kooshi, my bride!”

And the husband, bravest in danger,
Grasping his magical brand
And launching a blow at the stranger,
Shattered the blade in his hand.

That weapon whose fame was repeated
Raised never aloft in vain;
Now, baffled and broken, defeated
Aimed at the god of the main.

Her husband then lovingly kneeling,
Besought her never to part,
But she, through enchantment, unfeeling
Heard not the throbs of his heart.

And out where the moonlight was gleaming
Blindly she passed with the god;
While hoping the waking was dreaming
He followed whither they trod.

Disdaining the sea-god's displeasure—
He shadowed them down to the tide,
Spell-bound by that marvelous measure,
“Kokina, Kooshi, my bride!”

All golden the barge on the billow—
Kokina wafted aboard,

STORY AND SONG

Rests fair on the god as a pillow,
Crying farewell to her lord.

“Go back! O my husband, my lover,
Farewell! be glad if you can;
The waters I know will soon cover
The fairest maid of Japan.

“Believe me, my heart is rebelling,
Mourning my husband and pride,
But Ocean my will is compelling,
Chanting: ‘O Kooshi, my bride’ ”

He followed with every endeavor
To rescue his bride so brave,
Till billows closed over forever—
Buried him under the wave.

Three days and three nights there came ringing,
Winging along with the tide,
Sad voices so mournfully singing:
“Kokina, Kooshi, my bride!
“Kokina, Kooshi, my bride!”

WANDERINGS OF ULYSSES

RECENT WANDERINGS OF ULYSSES

Progress Circle, New Year's Eve, 1901.

The hour was late and strange the fate
That found me at my labors ;
Though little done since rise of sun
I courted Wisdom's favors.

Mid volumes bound of lore profound
I caught myself a-dozing,
And strove to keep from balmy sleep
Yet knew mine eyes were closing.

With mind perplexed and vainly vexed
Twixt history and fable,
I sought to rout full many a doubt
Of Homer, yet unable.

Thus wearied o'er with ancient lore
Expressed in flowing numbers,
I took a sup from Morpheus' cup
And soon was wrapt in slumbers.

How long I slept of sense bereft
I never could remember —
When slumber broke and I awoke
The fire was but an ember.

The lamp, once trim, was dark and dim—
My spouse was sweetly snoring ;

STORY AND SONG

While in the room the gypsy moon
Broad beams was brightly pouring.

What wakened me to reverie
Will ever be a wonder;
It seemed a knock and then a shock
And then a peal of thunder.

From roof to floor a sullen roar,
Like men in arms embattled,
As I forbore to open the door
The windows loudly rattled.

While reason wakes the dwelling shakes
From outer walls to center,
And ere my wondering silence breaks
I saw a being enter.

No footfall echoed from the floor,
And though I scented danger
I summoned courage felt before
And boldly faced the stranger.

Before my sight a giant's height,
A beamy breadth of shoulders,
A sinewy arm to threaten harm
And terrify beholders.

The cheeks were scarred, their beauty marred,
One hand did lack a finger;
His scars and bars proclaimed the wars
Where Progress loved to linger.

WANDERINGS OF ULYSSES

Around his frame a tunic came,
A cloak of antique pattern,
Where, woven fine, were forms divine—
Minerva, Jove and Saturn.

And one could trace within the face
A bold and manly spirit,
A wisdom writ, the keenest wit
With irony a-near it.

Though slow I am since I began,
It needed not a minute
To read the grace, the garb, the face
And note the wisdom in it.

With conqu'ring will my fears grew still,
Then in a voice compelling:
"How dare you, sir," I loudly shrill,
"To thus invade my dwelling?"

He courtly bent his stately head
Like knight of star and garter,
Then in a voice majestic said:
"I found your door ajar, sir.

"And after knocking loud and long
And never seeing mortal,
I shook the brazen handle strong
When open flew the portal.

"And as my time was rather brief
To pay a friendly visit,

STORY AND SONG

I own I entered like a thief
With step that seemed illicit.

“And here I find you nodding o’er
These tomes upon the table,
And offer you uncommon lore
To solve you myth and fable.”

Said I: “You entered as you chose—
Sine an invitation;
I pardon this if you disclose
Your nation, name, and station.”

His features shone: “One word alone
All ignorance dismisses.
“Behold!” he cried in kingly tone,
“I am the sage Ulysses.”

I marveled much, I marvel more
Since now the scene is over,
That I should see within my door
This great and mighty rover.

And queries fast came surging past
Beyond all words and phrases,
Of Hector brave and Nestor grave
And proud Achilles’ praises.

And since he sat beneath my dome
It seemed a pleasing duty,
To listen to his journey home—
But first of Helen’s beauty.

WANDERINGS OF ULYSSES

I prayed him then reveal again
How Helen seemed so peerless,
To send a hundred thousand men
To battle Trojans fearless.

“Was her’s the fairest form of earth
Without the least restriction,
Or was her beauty, like her worth,
A bit of Homer’s fiction?”

“The name you speak,” replied the Greek,
“Is haply a misnomer;
For, though I traveled oceans bleak,
I never heard of Homer.

“But if he writ in later time
Of Helen beauty laden,
The fairest child of Zeus sublime
And still an earthly maiden,

“He followed truth, yet not one prize
Inspired the slaughter wholly,
Fair Helen did but symbolize
All women, high and lowly.

“Each man in Helen’s form divine,
Where Venus loved to hover,
Beheld another face as fine
That owned him lord and lover.

“If Paris held Queen Helen then,
How could a lowly heiress

STORY AND SONG

Safeguard herself from daring men
Who foully followed Paris?

“While Trojan walls were undermined
With right good will and pleasure,
We struck a blow for woman-kind,
Man’s high and holy treasure.

“Some fought for spoil, or fame inclined
The ages to illumine,
But every warrior’s heart enshrined
The portrait of some woman.

“Though plain of face, and little grace,
A lowly hut to dwell in,
To him it was a royal place
And she a blameless Helen.”

Ulysses paused and after while
I shyly mentioned Circe,
And fair Calypso’s luring smile—
Who showed him little mercy.

“How came it, sir, these maids of guile
For eight long years were keeping
Ulysses from his rocky isle,
And Penelope a-weeping?”

He grimly smiled, then answered low:
“When perished Priam’s towers
I prayed that I might homeward go
Unhindered by the powers.

WANDERINGS OF ULYSSES

“Unheard, unheeded rose my prayers.
By Neptune fiercely hated,
Woes heaped on woes, unnumbered cares
Ulysses bore, ill-fated.

“By fortune tossed to Circe’s sea,
I found her more than human,
Or if a mortal maid, then we
Are weaker far than woman.

“And if I fell beneath the spell
Of fair Calypso longer,
’Twould seem to tell by logic well
The weaker are the stronger.

“I never knew until tonight,
Penelope was tearful—
It must have been the horrid sight
Of slaughter that was fearful.

“Four baneful years the suitor train
Ran riot in my towers,
And queenly aim seemed rather vain
Of her coquettish powers.

“Think not I came to dim her fame
Or cast one base suspicion—
Penelope’s the brightest name
Among the women Grecian.”

A thousand things I fain would know
Of Eris’ golden apple,

STORY AND SONG

Which set Hellenic hosts aglow
With Trojan arms to grapple.

How gods made sport of human life,
Doomed kingdoms fair to slaughter,
Because a princeling judge Jove's wife
Was plainer than his daughter.

But ere my queries leaped in air
Ulysses read them hidden;
In deep despair his lips declare:
"Such knowledge is forbidden."

He paused an instant as the clock
Was chiming out the hour;
The Grecian gazed, perplexed, amazed
At such peculiar power.

I told the plan that watches ran
To count Time's flying movements,
And he began: "Perchance then man
Hath other fair improvements.

"If thou wilt be a guide to me
I'll deem thy toil a favor,
To kindly show where'er we go
The marked results of labor.

"Nearby I viewed an olive tree,
The sign of famous Athens,
And roamed a valley fair to see
Which many cattle fattens.

WANDERINGS OF ULYSSES

“Your figs I know, your purple grapes
Are surely Bacchanalian;
If I might now dispute your dates
I’d hardly seem an alien.

“Your mountains high that prop the sky
Inspire a lofty mission,
And near thy shores old Neptune roars
To make the land like Grecian.

“Your temples seem a recent dream—
Behold on yonder gleaming
A single cross with gold emboss;
Can’st thou construe its meaning?”

“Your gods are dead and gone,” I said ;
“Olympian heights are lonely.
We worship one almighty head,
The Father of men, only.

“That cross a symbol of His child
To death and torture given,
By those he would have reconciled
To Life and Truth and heaven.”

He sadly sighed and then replied :
“The night is swiftly going —
Wilt thou abide Ulysses’ guide
And show what’s worth the showing?”

I plead infirmity and age,
A frame somewhat rheumatic :

STORY AND SONG

Then, coming near, the mighty sage
Smiled down on me ecstatic.

He touched and banished every ill—
His hand was like an ember;
It lent a thrill to nerve and will
And freedom to each member.

He waved aside my thanks and cried:
"No time for idle talking."
He clasped my hand and bade me stand
And I, once more, was walking.

A brilliant sight, a royal night,
Ulysses gazed in wonder
In street and shop, in tree and top
With shadows playing under.

He vowed: "The stars are chained to earth."
(His ancient mind benighted.)
I showed him streets and homes of worth
Are now electrolighted.

He shouted, as we passed up Main,
"Beware! the fiery dragon!"
"Nay, nay," I deign, "a railway train,
A mighty horse and wagon."

We hailed a car but when afar
He saw electric flashes,
And startled by the lambent flame
He panic-stricken dashes.

WANDERINGS OF ULYSSES

In disarray he groaning lay—
I bade him cease his moaning,
Then waked a city leagues away
And set him telephoning.

So weirdly sound the words profound,
Polite the tone and civil;
The hero heard each mystic word
As voice of Delphic sibyl.

We hailed afar another car
Which bore us to the city,
With women fair whose bosoms bare
Awoke his wond'ring pity.

The ghostly ear could plainly hear
The phonographic singing;
And music bells wrought deeper spells
When Christmas chimes were ringing.

We climbed nearby a stairway high
Above the topmost gable,
And viewed a scene twixt earth and sky
Surpassing fairy fable.

Like shuttles flying to and fro
The shadows swiftly cleaving,
The rainbow cars would come and go,
A mighty city weaving!

Saw man's desire in strands of wire
From hill-top, mast and steeple;

STORY AND SONG

We note the living lights of fire,
The distant hum of people.

I solved him how Jove's lightnings bow
To man a servant willing,
A hundred-handed giant now,
A Hermes swift and thrilling.

How mighty iron vessels glide
With automatic motion,
And breast the gale without a sail
And laugh at angry ocean.

I pointed where the viewless air
Bore wires telegraphic
To cables deep where monsters sleep
Unconscious of their traffic.

"Enough," he cried, "let magic end,
This passes our Elysian ;
Perchance, O friend, when we descend,
'Twill fade away, a vision."

Upon the elevator's call
We entered with fair ladies,
And as the room began to fall,
"O save," he cried, "from Hades."

Quite indiscreet, we crossed a street,
Midst cars and cycles flying;
The Grecian said : "I'm of the dead
Or I should soon be dying."

WANDERINGS OF ULYSSES

At length arrived at tunnel wide,
 "Ah safe," he sighed, "a grotto."
Then leaped aside where bikers ride
 And just escaped an auto.

"No more," he cried, "no more I pray,
 Nor other wonders notice.
I marvel not ye moderns say :
 'This is the land of Lotus.'

"Where all earth's flowers scent the breeze,
 Where every fruit is eaten;
The garden of Hesperides
 And our Elysian beaten.

"With women fair as naiads rare,
 With men of might and magic ;
I now declare their wills to dare
 Surpass the ages tragic.

"And grander things shall Chronos bring
 Beyond all Grecian glory,
A Homer yet unborn to sing
 Your country's deathless story.

"But not for me your nightless days,
 The rush and roar and rattle ;
Unfitted I for modern ways,
 A pigmy in your battle.

"I bid thee now a fond farewell;
 And, though a guest unbidden,

STORY AND SONG

A thousand secrets I would tell
Of ancient wisdom hidden.

“ But see Aurora’s fingers fair
The mountain peaks adorning!
I must forsake the upper air
Ere come the beams of morning.”

He faded as a dream will fade,
Looked backward long and tender,
As I beheld the sun arrayed
In majesty and splendor.

A MOTHER'S LOVE

A MOTHER'S LOVE

Time is waiting a moment for me
To behold a vision fair;
He has raised the sky from peak to sea
And beauty is everywhere.

The river flows by forest and field
Where my infant songs were sung;
Where over me like a warrior's shield
The whispering maples hung.

The sun is watching the winding sheet
The storm-king weaves of white
And the diamonds shaped of snow and sleet
Reflect his golden light.

The frost has locked both river and lake
And given the key to Spring;
They silent sleep but will soon awake
When the early robins sing.

Both forest and field are left behind
And prairies come in view;
O'er chasm and gorge we swiftly climb
The heights which pierce the blue.

The mountains now have lifted their heads
To prop the drooping sky,

STORY AND SONG

Where the sea-born cloudlet often sheds
Her tears in passing by.

We are resting now in orange land
By Balboa's peaceful sea.
But 'tis not for these I understand
This vision appears to me.

For forest and field and changing sights
Are naught but the picture's frame;
I have need to scale the grander heights
To worthily write its name.

For earth hath never a desert wide
Nor mountain towering free,
To measure the half my dearest guide
Has fondly given to me.

Name me a price for a mother's love,
What do I think of gold?
Pile it as high as the heavens above —
For that it can't be sold.

Fashion a palace beyond compare
With jewels garnished bright,
With costly wood and marble rare
A dazzling house of light;

To this you may join a royal throne,
A kingdom you may proffer;
She would raise me high to make mine own
The scepter that you offer.

A M O T H E R ' S L O V E

* * * *

Within the circled rim of life
I see her form beside me,
Warding away the storm and strife
And ills that would betide me.

She watched beside my cradle sleep
While helplessly I slumbered,
Beseeching Heaven to guard and keep
With prayers that can't be numbered.

As years rolled on the storms of youth
Were hushed with her caressing,
While from fond lips I learned the truth
That makes of life a blessing.

And though I cannot reason why
I often caused her sorrow,
The pardon of her kindly eye
Came always ere the morrow.

And now, though many years are fled
Since I became a rover,
Her blessings follow where I tread
And shielding hover over.

Oh, wondrous love a mother shows—
A wonder never ceasing—
A love which God implanted grows
Throughout the years increasing.

* * * *

STORY AND SONG

My vision fair begins to end
Like panoramic letter;
It teaches me, my dearest friend,
How deep I am your debtor!

And though the language that we speak
Hath many words and phrases,
It seemeth now but poor and weak
Since I would pen your praises.

Yet not a murmur shall this bear
In one way or another,
As I a priceless jewel wear,
The love of my dear mother!

And when I pass adown the tide
To cross the mystic river,
Oh, meet me on the farther side
And love me there forever.

JENNIE

JENNIE

This land hath many charms, I know,
Of tropic fruit and vine;
Its mountain tops are crowned with snow;
Its valleys teem with wine.

The odor of the orange bloom
O'erladens vesper breeze,
And ocean zephyrs bear perfume
From flowering almond trees.

The feathered palm and stately pine
Are rivals for a place,
While boughs of cedar and of lime
Here often interlace.

The bending fruit of lemon tree,
The modest apple's worth,
And olive of the southern sea
Ask only soil for birth.

Amid the ever-blooming rose
Are fairest lilies seen;
Magnolia with acacia glows
Beneath the moonlight's sheen.

And overhead in summer time,
Nay during all the year,

STORY AND SONG

The tuneful birds are pouring rhyme
In every waiting ear.

Yet in this paradise below
Of favored fruits and flowers,
Of songs which seem to ever flow
Within these fragrant bowers,

I think of one who neath them goes—
The theme of humble pen—
More worth to me than all that grows
In valley, plain or glen.

I know with me you will agree
If multiplied by ten,
So valuable they would not be
As my beloved Jen.

LONGING

LONGING

Sing, O muse of Heaven, sing
A song of hope and cheer,
For the heart is weary and worn
With a weight of sorrow borne
Year after year.

Come, O holy angel, come
With answer from on high,
Why a feeble form was made
To battle giants fierce arrayed,
To suffer, then to die.

Send, O God of Heaven, send
A ray of light divine,
As thou didst send to ancient men;
Illuminate a humble pen,
Inspire some word of mine.

Hear, O Thou who hearest all,
The deep, despairing cry
Of helpless beings set afloat
On ether sea in open boat,
Waiting, waiting to die.

Behold, O Thou who seest all,
The earth a ship at sea;

STORY AND SONG

Driven northward and then to south,
Feeling famine and deadly drouth,
Hurricaned east and now to west—
Vainly seeking a port of rest—
The ship of humanity.

Give, O Giver of all good,
Give thy children light.
Show us whither our driftings tend,
Give us a glimpse of Heaven as end
To cheer our hearts to fight.

Show, O Thou who showeth the way,
Thy love from day to day.
Let it bind like the strongest rope
Our tired hearts to the anchor hope
And hold them safe away.

FATE

I hold that Fate is but a foil
To try the metal of the soul ;
'Tis not the triumph but the toil
That bringeth nearer to the goal.

We proudly deem our pathway best
And fret at barriers on the way,
When bolts and bars are but the test
Of worth that wins a later day.

Perchance the chosen pathway's wrong,
Perchance! ah, is there any chance?
Although another's thrice as long
Be sure it leadeth in advance.

'Tis earnest striving lendeth strength,
The thrust and parry giveth skill,
And Fate may go the utmost length
Ere seeming bends his sovereign will.

'Tis only seeming, for the strife
Hath lent us keener eyes to see,
Amid the wilful dreams of life,
The King's highway to victory.

THE OAKS

A tiny oak a summer's day
Was withering in the burning sun;
The life was slipping fast away—
An infant life but scarce begun.

I hastened to a singing rill
And kneeling on its flowery brink,
My hunting cap did quickly fill
Then gave the dying oak a drink.

When I returned long years had flown—
Old Time had sprinkled locks with gray—
And there I found my oak had grown
A mighty monarch o'er the way.

Within its boughs a choir of birds
Made all the air resound with song;
Beneath its arches lowing herds
Found cooling shade the summer long.

* * * *

I gave a friendly hand to one
Who, fiercely by temptation tried,
Arose and stood and overcome
The satan he had walked beside.

Now as a giant oak he stands
And turns aside misfortune's rod

THE OAKS

From wearied hearts and weakened hands—
Co-worker with Almighty God.

Thrice blessed he who reaches down
To help a fallen brother up;
And thou art drawing near a crown
By giving one refreshing cup.

THE FAVORED ONES

Last night as I was dreaming
Of another Christmas night,
There came a moon-beam streaming
Like a Jacob's ladder bright.
And down the silvern ladder
Came an angel passing fair,
And the darkened room was gladder
With his sweet and heavenly air.

And I dreamed he told the story,
How the mighty and the strong
Came once with him from glory
To chant a wondrous song.
And a sweeter song was never
Heard by any mortal ears —
A song that grows forever
Sweet and sweeter through the years.

Not to the proud and haughty,
Nor to those of lordly state,
Nor in the temple lofty,
But to men of lowly fate.
To simple shepherds only
Came the chanting cherubim,
And on the hillside lonely
Was heard that holy hymn.

THE FAVORED ONES

The shepherds heard astounded:
 "Peace, peace to all the earth."
While all the air resounded
 For the blest Redeemer's birth.
They sang to God their praises
 On the hills of Bethlehem
And wove with heavenly phrases
 Good will to erring men.

Oh, blessed sight and hearing,
 Thrice favored shepherd men
To whom the host appearing
 Sang the Babe of Bethlehem.
And I dreamed the angel holy
 Praised the path the humble trod,
And taught me that the lowly
 Are the favored ones of God.

LET ME DWELL

Let me dwell where lofty mountains
Safely guard a peaceful dell;
Where the sweetly murm'ring fountains
All their dreams of ocean tell.
I would waken with the morning
And behold the sun in pride
With his beams the earth adorning
Till she sparkled like a bride.

In a fairy grotto dwelling
Where the birds would sing to me,
Each one of his freedom telling,
Wishing I were also free;
Free amid the giant towers
Lifted high above the plain,
Free to roam among the flowers,
Knowing naught of grief or pain.

There are those who love commotion
In the mighty city's roar,
Or the rage of angry ocean
Dashing wildly on the shore,
But for me Heaven seemeth nearer
From the crown of mountain high,
As I watch with vision clearer
Countless stars go wheeling by.

LET ME DWELL

There with God around me reigning
Far from sorrow, care and strife,
With my spirit upward training
For a grander, higher life;
Waiting for the summons only
With a sweet and calm content,
Praying that some mountain lonely
Be for me a monument.

RETROSPECTION

Come rest ye in the window
As sol sinks down the west,
And answer me the query,
Whom love you now the best?
I know that others loved thee
With love akin to pain;
If thou were now a-choosing
Would I be yours again?

I'll understand your answer
Though not a sigh is heard,
For secret thoughts of lovers
Need not the spoken word.
With fondest recollection
Recall the years ago
And choose again a lover,
Like maiden at her dawn.

Some offered wealth and station
But I had naught to give,
Save my sincere affection
So long as we should live;
Yea, I believe I told you
That we should love alway,
Both here and there in heaven—
Forever and a day.

RETROSPECTION

The boastful words of lover,
And still I hold them true,
That we shall love each other
Beyond that curtain blue.
Though now and then a sorrow
Brought bitter tears like rain,
Yet ever on the morrow
Our joy effaced the pain.

Speak not, for speech is silver;
Thy silence be the gold
That gives my heart a message
Too precious to be told.
I envy not the mighty
Nor those of princely line —
Since thou art mine forever
And I forever thine.

THE WATCHWORD

Stand porter at the door of thought.

—Science and Health, 392.

Stand guard, O christian soldier;

Be faithful evermore,

Let not a thought of evil

Find entrance at the door.

Put on the proven armor

And with the word of Truth

Rout every form of error

And win immortal youth.

Be mindful of the temple

To keep the holy place,

So He may send His angels

To meet thee face to face.

O let the upper chamber

Be garnished pure and bright,

All ready for the Master

Who bringeth Life and light.

Hush all the mortal senses

That ye may hear the word,

For in the deepest silence

The voice of Truth is heard.

Be constant in communion,

Keep faithful watch and ward

THE WATCHWORD

That ye may hear the greetings
Of the ever present Lord.

Again the heavenly Father
Hath sent the certain sign,
That He is with His children
In healing power divine.
And stately science marches
With Leader on before,
Who signals us the WATCHWORD:
“Stand porter at the door.”

THE UNFINISHED STATUE

In classic Greece a temple stands,
So beautiful to human eye,
Although the work of earthly hands,
It seems the product of the sky.

And thus indeed the legends run,
That many forms of god-like race
Began when Phoebus hid the sun
To carve and set the stones in place.

The virgin marble daily brought
Was nightly into beauty born,
Beyond the power of mortal thought,
Surpassing human skill to form.

I know not how the temple came
With all its beauty, truth and worth,
For time has hidden name and fame
Of those who here enriched the earth.

Within that stately templed hall-
A group of marble statues rise,
And if skilled mortals need to call
For aid above the bended skies,

To build the temple, then I know
They must have very lowly bent

THE UNFINISHED STATUE

And prayed the powers not to go
Till each his own bright image lent.

Each statue stands in thoughtful mood,
As though a living, breathing god —
Might speak a language understood,
Or smile and answer with a nod.

Instinct with swift intelligence,
Of matchless form and peerless face,
If not from heaven, O tell me whence
Came all this fairness, mind and grace.

Another statue—incomplete—
A neighbor, yet aloof it stands,
As though the sculptor would repeat
A stroke before it left his hands

To take its place among the rest
Divinely wrought, divinely fair,
As if perfection were the test
For entrance where the brothers are.

Tho' heaven's brightness, truth and worth
Are visible in curve and line,
It yet must lose some touch of earth
To show forth beauty all divine.

Famed masters came to strike the blow
To set the dreamed-of beauty free;
But no one struck, for none could know
Whose likeness should the statue be.

STORY AND SONG

No mortal found the needed skill—
None wise enough to understand—
And there it is awaiting still
A single touch of master hand.

* * * *

Oh God, as statues incomplete,
Before thy loving face we stand,
And humbly pray that we may meet
A touch of thine almighty hand.

Oh carve within each child of thine
A likeness of Thyself alone,
So all will know the hand divine
Has wrought a marvel all its own.

Thy power alone can set us free
From seeming ills of mortal birth—
An image of Thyself to be,
Without a single touch of earth.

A CHRISTMAS PRAYER

Out of the blue that bends above
Come Thou, O Lord! to-day in love,
Let seraphs chant their song again:
“Peace! peace on earth, good will to men!”
Oh gladden now our mother earth
A second time, by second birth,
By reappearing once again
Incarnate in the hearts of men;
How small the upward growth we show
Through nineteen hundred years of woe!
The rich whom Thou rebuked of old
Have multiplied a thousand fold,
And tens of thousands feel the fate
Of Lazarus at Dives’ gate.
They gather in their wealth untold —
A miser’s musty, rusty gold, —
And watch their fellows by the scores
Starving and freezing at their doors.
Melt Thou their hearts to give and give!
For all men have a right to live.
Melt Thou their gold until it runs
To feed the hungry, starving ones,
To warm and clothe the poor and weak,
Who vainly honest labor seek.
The Pharisees, in haughty pride,
Still on the earth, O Lord! abide,

And claim anew the highest place,
As paragons of all the race.
The priest and Levite still pass by
And leave the wounded one to die;
But thanks to Thee, for now and then
There comes the good Samaritan,
Who, with a brother's heart to feel,
Binds up the cruel wounds of steel.
Speak, Lord, to souls so sad and sore :
"Go thou, O woman, sin no more."
And with Thy finger as a pen
Write mercy on the hearts of men.
We seek no later word or sign —
Thy gospel, Lord, is still divine,
And fills the whole of human needs,
If prayers would blossom into deeds.
O let the spirit of Thy word
In every land be felt and heard,
Till men will know their hoards of years
Are minted out of human tears,
And hasten backward with the spoil
They wrung from weaker brother's toil.
Speed, speed the hour when we shall see
More justice, love and, charity —
Till all will feel each human throb
As children of one Father, God !

THE THREE BELLS

THE THREE BELLS

Ho ! sexton, strong sexton, why ring you the bell?
And what of the message it striveth to tell?
Do winds as they stoop for a burden of song
Bear sorrow or joy as they journey along ?

Aye, stranger, fair stranger, list, list to the bell,
And learn you the tidings it seeketh to tell:
It rings out with gladness this bright summer morn,
For a baby in yonder brave mansion is born.

Ho ! sexton, good sexton, why ring you the bell?
And what are the triumphs it seems to foretell?
Its message rolls onward surpassingly grand,
As if it would welcome the great of the land.

Kind neighbor, true neighbor, list, list to the bell,
And hear their sweet vows in its musical swell.
Mark thou the " I will " of the groom in his pride,
Who lovingly looks on the face of his bride.

Ho ! sexton, gray sexton, why toll you the bell?
Whose heart bows in sorrow, for whom is the knell?
I hear the sad wailing, the cry of despair —
I catch the low voice of the preacher in prayer.

O brother, dear brother, list, list to the bell:
Its throbbing, how mournful, yet know all is well.

STORY AND SONG

It rang for the baby ; it welcomed the bride,
And now it is tolling because she has died.

But brother, still list to a deep undertone,
Resounding so sweet in a note of its own;
It rises in waves like a musical tide,
Till blending with song on eternity's side.

She came as a blessing from region above;
She gave of herself, of her gold and her love;
She followed the pathway her Savior had trod,
And was fitted to stand in the presence of God.

SANTA CLARA VALLEY

Afar where yonder mountains high
Stand propping up the opal sky,
A streamlet in its maiden leap
Dashes itself adown the steep,
To join anon in wid'ning sweep
The peaceful waters of the deep.
The fountain swiftly speeds away
To wed the mountains with the bay ;
Beneath our feet it sings along
The carol of its bridal song.
From cedared heights to waters blue
Fair is the land to mortal view.

Behold, by Nature's hand arrayed,
Orchards of every hue and shade.
The vineyards, sloping gently down,
With luscious beauty highlands crown.
Embroidered blocks of olive green
Checker the land along the stream,
While rival ranks of cherries run,
Flashing their beauty in the sun.
Towering pine and pampas plume
Soon will nod to the purpling prune.
Three months ago the almonds fair
Were swinging censers in the air,

STORY AND SONG

Wafting on high their recompense,
Sweeter than myrrh and frankincense,
And matin song of praising bird
From golden orange bough was heard,
While countless hands of fronded palm
Welcome waved in the vernal calm.

Beyond that hill, fair Nature's toy,
Lies hid the town of far Gilroy.
Across yon deeply wooded glen
Are the whitened homes of Almaden,
Where nature sought in vain to hide
Her store which gleams a silver tide,
And from the mountains' bursting side,
Through shaft and tunnel deep and wide,
The liquid silver, led by men,
Pours from the mines of Almaden.
Viewed from afar, I faintly see
Thy grove, O University!
The distant touch of space and time
Hath smoothed that rugged form of thine,
Till heart and soul and eye can see
Only the good and fair in thee.

That azure gleaming far away —
A seeming fragment of the sky —
Is where the freighted waters lie
Of lordly San Francisco Bay.
It is the turquoise of the ring,

SANTA CLARA VALLEY

Whose circled rim the mountains form,
These verdant heights reared to adorn
The sweet abiding place of spring.
That height, beyond fair San José,
Surmounted by that regal dome,
Hath now become the vigil home
Of those who walk the starry way.
Oh, crowned pile of Hamilton!
Where mysteries are brought to light,
Where worlds are conquered of the night,
And marvel after marvel won.

TWO FLOWERS

To "Little Sister."

A violet bloomed in mountain dell,
With tender grace on fairy face,
And hue an artist loves so well,
But only God knows how to trace.

'Twas lowly, yet its chalice cup
Its treasure lent, and sweetest scent
Rose ever upward and still up,
Like orisons on heaven bent.

A strong wind came and rudely shook
The tiny bloom till all perfume
Was yielded up; but oh, the look
The flower gave was tinged with gloom.

Then sighed the wind: "I know I stole
Thy perfumed air, but I shall bear
It onward where a youthful soul
Is passing while he breathes a prayer."

"Oh, take my life," the flower said;
"I give him all if I can call
Him earthward; or if he be dead,
Then let me rest upon the pall."

* * * *

TWO FLOWERS

There is a flower of human form
Whose prayers arise as sacrifice,
In sunshine or in darkened storm,
Up and still upward to the skies.

A strong hand smote this bloom in youth;
Yet from pale lips no murmur slips,
But only thankfulness in truth
That God is near in life's eclipse.

Oft through the leaden night she prays,
And days like night; for, 'reft of light,
God giveth her His brighter rays,
Best fitted for angelic sight.

God giveth more; His mystic peace
In spite of dole surrounds the soul,
Till baffled evil learns to cease
To try to swerve her from her goal.

And death himself, with threat of doom,
Oft comes, then goes, as if he chose
To leave this fair courageous bloom,
To shame the cowards whom he knows.

This tiny one is strong, yet weak,
Frail as a flower whose only power
Is beauty, but the soul though meek
Is mightier than an armed tower.

A thousand hearts are in her debt,
For soothing word and prayers unheard

STORY AND SONG

On earth; and, like the violet,
She offers all unto her Lord.

And we, who all of this behold,
Do pray in love to One above
That He still bless her manifold,
And treat her as a wounded dove.

TO MILDRED

TO MILDRED

A little lady whom I know
Said: "I'll be seven to-morrow,
And laughing through the world I go
Without a thought of sorrow.

"The sun peeps o'er the mountain top,
And greets me with his lances;
And through the day he seems to stop,
With many kindly glances.

"He turns the dew on bud and bloom
To gems of purest water,
And fills the air with sweet perfume,
As though I were his daughter.

"The moon sweeps onward through the sky,
With starry children round her,
To silvern all the path that I
Am walking while I ponder,

"If stars and moon in sailing round
In the darkness by themselves,
Have seen the fays, or ever found
The home of the fairy elves.

"So loving all beneath the sun,
I never borrow trouble;

STORY AND SONG

While many friends and kindred come
To make my joys seem double."

I'd wrong us both to waken thee
From out your sweet elysian,
Although it often seems to me
Earth's joys are but a vision.

But while old Time shall onward sweep,
To turn your seven to seventy,
May sweet contentment ever keep
Your wishes pure and heavenly.

And with a heart filled full of love
For all that God created,
Your life be linked to heaven above,
Your joys be unabated.

FUTURITY

I know not how, nor when nor where—

Yet I believe that we shall meet
Beyond that tapestry of air,
When mortal pulses cease to beat.

I cannot think that thou wert made
So wonderously fair to see—
To bloom a season, then to fade
And vanish as a dream from me.

While gazing in deep eyes of thine,
I deem I read the truth to be
That thou the image of divine
Will live through all eternity.

And I, aware of my unworth,
Still fondly trust the power of love
To lift me upward from the earth,
Until I reach the plane above.

I know not which of us will go
To pioneer that distant state,
But something whispers me: "We know
The first will for the other wait."

So now I rest contentedly,
Regarding neither time nor place,
As in the end mine eyes shall see
Mine own beloved face to face.

LEAVE THEM ALONE

The San Bernardino Indians, hearing that their ancient burial grounds were to be plowed and planted to orchard by white people, entered an indignant protest. They have appealed to the Washington authorities to prevent the threatened desecration of their fathers' graves.

O Saxon, who boasts of dominion earth-wide,
Leave them alone on their barren hillside ;
Touch not their dust with your impious hand ;
Spare to the sleepers their last rood of land.
Once lords of woodland, of meadow and stream,
Their sway has vanished away like a dream,
From heights encompassing valley around ;
You deem them trespassers under the ground.
Where once they were chieftains of mighty domains,
Through force and fraud, not an acre remains.
Ye robbed them of all by cunning and might,
Beggared their children from height unto height.
Prate not of your justice, and say ye bought,
For sometime and somewhere wrongs that were
wrought,
In spite of decisions and laws ye laud,
Have tainted your deeds in the forum of God.
Think not their children, though deep in disgrace,
Ever dishonored humanity's race

LEAVE THEM ALONE

And bartered for gold the grave of a sire,
Save tempted by drink that withers like fire.
Some dust is so sacred even your gold,
Though you were dowered as Croesus of old,
Weighs as light in scales of ultimate worth,
As paltriest things on face of the earth.
Conceding that all you grasp is your own,
Stir not the sleepers where each rests alone ;
But grant their children this acre of sod
In a vale, whose spires should teach them of God.
A few years at most, the remnant will lie
In couches of earth 'neath blue of the sky,
Anear to sires, who peopled the West,
The first and last will be gathered to rest.
So leave them their graves where poppies will spring,
Where breezes at morn and even will sing
A requiem sweet, with sorrowful tone
Bewailing a race deprived of its own,
Who once masters of all, from mountain to wave,
Now begs the stranger the gift of a grave.

LADDIE

Sweeter is faith by refining,
Stronger the soul that is tried,
And never you doubt
The good will come out,
If you in the faith abide.

Grieve not though Laddie be absent—
The Laddie you long to see—
Though fated to part,
The love of thine heart
Is drawing him home to thee.

Ruler of men and of nations,
Heeding his children divine,
Is guarding in love
From heaven above,
This little Laddie of thine.

Danger may threaten the Laddie—
Never you fear he will fall—
Far greater his worth
Than sparrows of earth,
Yet the Father heareth their call.

Brightly fair Luna is beaming,
Turning thy night into day,

LADDIE

She lamps in a room
To banish the gloom,
For Laddie so far away.

Daphne will glow on the morrow,
Dimming the torches of night,
The sun in plendor
Arise a defender,
Guiding the Laddie aright.

Fear not, though hidden the future,
Faint not, though Laddie must roam;
Believe and be glad,
Thy love for the Lad
Is surely bringing him home.

Happy a morn that is coming—
Tearful but brimming with joy—
Thy bosom will bound,
Thine arms circle round
Laddie, dear Laddie, thy boy.

ARMENIA

Armenia, O Armenia,
Will nations heed thy cry,
Or must thou feel the Moslem's steel
Till all thy people die?

Thy land that once held Eden,
Where Adam wept to dwell,
The savage Turk by fearful work
Hath made it now a hell.

Here Noah's mighty mountain
Uplifts its snowy head,
And views a plain piled high with slain,
Armenia's martyred dead!

Where maidens, Christian maidens,
Knelt down to fiendish Kurds,
And on the air breathed such a prayer
We dare not frame in words.

A prayer that even Satan
Might listen to with pain,
As daughters fair with bosoms bare
Begged only to be slain!

The virgin tears were answered
By mocking demons' laugh,

A R M E N I A

Than which the knife that ended life
Seemed kinder far by half.

Oh, chivalry of England!
Of Europe, of the earth!
Your blades should flash, your cannons crash
For human right and worth.

Ought Turkish tigers shepherd
This primal Christian fold,
To boast of crimes unnumbered times
Too fearful to be told?

Wake, Lion-hearted Richard!
Shake off the clinging sod!
And once again lead England's men
Against these foes of God.

CROWN OF THE VALLEY

(Pasadena)

Crown of the Valley, I leave thee in sadness—
Sadness akin to both pleasure and pain,
Pain in departing, and yet there is gladness
In hope that whispers I'll see thee again.

Crown of the Valley, thine orchards and flowers
Unrivalled by all green meadows of earth,
Save only the fairest God-planted bowers,
That sheltered and shadowed Eve at her birth.

Crown of the Valley, thy rival is beaten—
Much of her glory is taken away—
Here every fruit of the garden is eaten,
None in the land who would say to us, nay.

Crown of the Valley, the orange is fruiting—
Fruiting and shaming magicians of old;
Nature's warm smile is daily transmuting
White waxen flowers to planets of gold.

Crown of the Valley, thou seemest a maiden
With beauty of form and fragrance of bloom,
Breath of thy lips most heavily laden
With sweetest orange and almond perfume.

CROWN OF THE VALLEY

Crown of the Valley, if I were a lover
With boldness enough my love to declare,
I'd pray the kind fates that over us hover
Grant me permission thy glories to share.

Then Crown of the Valley, might I be forgiven
While passing a life enchantingly free,
If I should forget the pathway to heaven,
When all my longings were granted by thee.

A DREAM

A little lad with flaxen hair
Rocked to sleep in his father's chair;
Something tickled his dimpled chin—
He raised the veils that shut within
His mild blue eyes, and wond'ring woke,
Gazed round the room before he spoke :
“Mamma! I've been asleep and dreamed
A happy dream; it really seemed
That I rose upward to the sky,
And good St. Peter let me by.
And as I passed the double gate
The sun went down, 'twas growing late,
An angel came with golden hair,
With eyes of blue, complexion fair,
Hands as white as the lily bell
That blows in shady mountain dell.
Her voice was low and sounded sweet
As songs the seraphs sing to greet
The weary pilgrim from afar,
Who prays to pass the ‘Gates Ajar.’
With arms around me soft and warm
She pressed me gently to her form,
Uplifted me on downy bed,
And sweetly bending o'er me said :
‘I'm glad you've come, my darling boy,
To dwell alway with me in joy; .

A D R E A M

To see the angel choir meet,
And hear the music loud yet sweet,
Beneath high heaven's lofty dome.
This evermore to be our home,
Without a sorrow, sob or sigh,
Without a thought or fear to die;
With all things bright, and all things fair,
Where joy has banished every care.'
And then I thought my angel bright
Caressed me with such fond delight,
That o'er my face a smile broke;
And then I dreamed that I awoke.
And as I sought the angel's eyes,
Can you wonder at my surprise,
For, gazing in her eyes of blue,
Mamma dear, the angel was you!"

LA FIESTA DE LA FLORES

Come to the feast of the flowers!
Where music blends with mirth,
Where swiftly moving hours
Are brightest ones of earth.
Where maiden hearts are sighing
With joys they fear to show,
As through the dances flying
Their blushes come and go.

Come to the feast of the flowers!
Where Nature's fairest smile
Descends as gentle showers,
Like blessings all the while.
Where gardens in December
Tell strangers it is June;
For every month, remember,
Our roses bud and bloom.

Come to the feast of the flowers?
And all your life renew
Amid our orange bowers,
Beneath our sky so blue.
Come realizing your dreaming
Of happy distant clime,
Where Luna's light is streaming
O'er lemon grove and lime.

LA FIESTA DE LA FLORES

Come to the feast of the flowers!

Where pillared palm-tree stands
Anear the home and towers,
With its hundred waving hands;
They beckon you in gladness,
And bid you hither run,
Where joy will banish sadness
From the heart of ev'ry one.

Come to the feast of the flowers!

Behold a vision bright,
And one the princely powers
Might gaze on with delight.
A pageant beauty laden,
We welcome you to share
With ev'ry youth and maiden
Of Los Angeles, the fair.

AWAKEN, O QUEEN

To Mrs. Modina-Wood, Queen of La Fiesta, 1895

Awaken, O Queen! The stars of the morning
Are fading away from the realms of the East,
And cherubs of dawn the skies are adorning
With colors outrivaling those of thy feast;
The sun in glory will soon be revealing
The beauty and courage that thou wilt command;
Into thy bower his rays will be stealing,
Saluting the monarch who ruleth our land.

Awaken, O Queen! Awaken to splendor!
For thousands impatient are thronging the street,
Each one who would be a knightly defender
To guard and protect thee from harm and defeat.
They march from mountains, from meadows and
valleys,
The East and the West pay their homage to thee;
North and South are uniting in rallies,
As if they were never more rivals to be.

Awaken, O Queen! Awaken to gladness!
Take part in a dream that is more than a dream.
Waken to banish all sorrow and sadness
As far as thy kingdom extendeth, O Queen.
Awaken to pleasure, brightness and duty;

AWAKEN, O QUEEN

Thy subjects are waiting a word of command —
Are longing to catch a glimpse of thy beauty,
A smile of thy lips, or a wave of thy hand.

Awaken, O Queen! For regions surrounding
Are sending battalions in honor of thee;
With clamorous music air is resounding
For marvelous pageant of Balboa's sea.
Children are coming to prove their devotions;
What sovereign has subjects as happy and bright—
Full filling the heart with deepest emotions,
Emotions of beauty, sweet love and delight.

Awaken, O Queen! For brief is thy reigning —
A season of splendor for only a week;
Even though subjects are never complaining,
This briefness brings sadness that none of us seek.
So when La Fiesta's moments are ending,
And vanished the glitter, the worry and strife,
Perchance thou wilt favor all by extending
Thy scepter and kingdom the balance of life.

WELCOME, GRACIOUS QUEEN OF
MIRTH

To Mildred Howell Lewis, Queen of La Fiesta, 1896

Bannered flags in ocean air
Wave a welcome, lady fair,
Harvests of our gardens rare
Weave a pattern for your feet;
While upon the crowded street
Tens of thousands throng to greet
Thee, whose worth and beauty won
Fairest throne beneath the sun.

Dowered by thy God at birth
With a soul of highest worth,
With a beauty scarce of earth,
Welcome, gracious Queen of Mirth!
Sound the trumpet, strike the drum,
Let the wondrous pageant come!
Till our sovereign stricken dumb
Can but smile on every one.

Let the dragon banner fly!
Let the redmen sweeping by!
Let the navies welcome cry!
Till our bright Italian sky
Echoes back the glad refrain
From the mountains to the main,

QUEEN OF MIRTH

That Fiesta now again
Finds a peerless queen to reign.

Thanks, O Southland, unto thee,
Who hath given her to be
Sovereign of a people free ;
While our daughters fair to see,
Adding grandeur to the grand,
Gladly round her highness stand ;
Though each maiden's jeweled hand
Well could scepter fairy land.

With your regal form and face,
Mated to a kindly grace,
You have banished envy's trace
From the daughters of our race.
And with mystic, magic art,
Conquered every warrior's heart ;
Till a host of valiant arms
Ready stand to guard your charms.

Now behold a moving scene
Comes to greet thee, regnant queen.
Winding as a brilliant stream
In a bright and airy dream,
Come the children, onward led,
With our banner at their head.
Marching thus to show their love
To their queen and flag above.

STORY AND SONG

Gently, Time, O gently now,
Touch that regal form and brow!
Grant her fairest fortune thou!
Till our children's children bow
To the beauty we behold,
To her virtues manifold.
Then, O Queen, when earth is past,
Heaven welcome thee at last.

TEACH ME, PAINTER

TEACH ME, PAINTER

Teach me, Painter, how to blend
All the colors of your art,
So I can to verses lend
Beauty that will touch the heart.

Whisper, Painter, first of all,
Where you cull your deeper dye—
From what region do you call
Purple from the arching sky?

Doth a rainbow sometimes lend
Tinted harmony to thee?
Show me whither I must wend
To find such a bow for me.

Do you many pansies kill,
Stealing all their form and hue,
Then with all your magic skill,
Give them fadeless life anew?

There's a garden in your room
Filled with beauty of the plain.
Teach me how you made them bloom,
After every bloom was slain.

Solve me how you came to choose
What I fancied was a dream;

STORY AND SONG

Is there really such a scene,
"On the heights of Santa Cruz."

Teach, O teach the way to gain,
With a master's skillful hand,
All the beauties of the land,
All the grandeur of the main.

Ah, I fear I ask too much,
When I seek your power to form,
For the painter's magic touch
Is within the painter born.

LITTLE JIM

LITTLE JIM

Now, confess you're just a boaster,
An' are saving of the truth,
When you shout so long and lusty
Of your lean an' lanky youth;
When you vow no other infant,
Tho' even twict the size,
Can eekal him in wisdom,
Or the sparkle of his eyes.

I allow it ain't good manners
To run a baby down,
Fer his mammy calls him Beauty,
Tho' he's featured like a clown.
An' his daddy thinks his knowledge
So superlatively gran',
An' pertends to know a language
That none can understan'.

And yit I'll lay a wager,
That fer larnin' an' fer worth,
Thar ain't another infant
Upon the rollin' earth,
Can even hold a candle
In wisdom or in lim',
To a lovely blue-eyed darlin',
Whose name is Little Jim.

STORY AND SONG

You may claim that winter roses
Are a charmin' site to see,
An' swar the modest vi'let 's
As sweet as sweet can be,
But thar's never yit a blossom,
However fair an' trim,
Can match this bud o' beauty,
Our han'some Little Jim.

When he makes a long oration—
Not a lawyer in the town
Is half so interestin',
As this baby in his gown.
An' his sire loves to listen—
Fer the message soun's to him
Like an ecko sent from heav'n
By the shinin' serafim.

He's got a mind an' knows it,
An' when he waves a han',
His granny, dad and mammy
Run to answer his comman';
It may be in the mornin',
At the drowsy hour of one,
But when an' what he orders
Is straightway to be done.

An' all they git in wages
Is just a baby's smile;
But this is so enchantin'
It pays fer every trile;

LITTLE JIM

Fer they love the little tyrant,
An' bow an' worship him,
As if God had sent an angel
To be known as Little Jim.

Oh, yes, he bears another name
Which many will forget —
His mammy fon'ly calls him:
"Mister James Barnett."
But to his lowly nabors,
This seems so proud and prim,
That I allow he'll answer
To the name of Little Jim.

P'raps you'll think I'm boastin',
Tho' it's little I have told,
Fer tho' he 's wise an' witty,
He 's hardly six months old.
But still I'll risk a wager
That in a match with him,
Your little monkey youngster
Can't class with Little Jim.

JUNE

Oh June, June, dear little June!
Your smile is a poem, your laughter a tune,
Sunshine your presence so winsome and bright,
Wooring and winning all hearts with delight.

Oh June, June, maidenly June!
Your heart is a treasure, your love heaven's boon;
Beside these all glittering jewels of worth
Are paltriest dust on the face of the earth.

Oh June, June, light-hearted June!
Heaven send you a blessing each turn of the moon;
In the shine of the stars, when sol is on high,
May Fortune, fair Fortune, be ever near by.

Oh June, June, sweet little June!
We're glad that you came, tho' you're leaving too soon;
Fond hearts will be aching and saddest tears flow
When June, fairy June, turns homeward to go.

But June, June, you'll come again soon,
Come in the darkness, or come at high noon;
Our doors will swing open, our hearts will rejoice,
When we shall behold thee, and hear thy sweet voice.

THE SAILOR'S RETURN

Ho, Captain, tell me true —

Where is my sailor blue?

One summer's day,
With eyes that could not weep,
With sorrow buried deep,
I watched him outward sweep
Adown the bay.

Years, years are dead and past
Since his top-gallant mast

Was lost to view;
Yet every night and day
I kneel to God and pray
That he who sailed away
Might still be true.

My lad like thee was bold,
But hardly now so old

As thou I vow;
His eyes were blue as thine,
His smile almost divine;
I'd give all else of mine
To see him now.

STORY AND SONG

Thy form and winsome grace
Recall my laddie's face,
 And give me joy.
Thy smile speaks to my heart
That we shall never part,
For now I know thou art
 My sailor boy.

A MAID WITH A HEART

A MAID WITH A HEART

There's a dreamy island of coral rare
In the sunny southern sea,
Where the mermaids combing their golden hair
Were exceedingly fair to me.

While twining and combing their locks with care,
Their magical notes prolong,
Asking if I had the courage to dare
To list to a siren song.

"We seek for a king who is brave and free,
And the fairest maid of us all
Will be his queen and the queen of the sea,
And be crowned in our coral hall.

"Will you come and dwell in a palace grand,
And recline on a couch of gold?
You shall rule us all with a royal hand,
If you are very strong and bold.

"There is not a maiden in all the earth
Can rival a maid of the sea,
For Beauty gave each a kiss at her birth,
And our beauty will always be."

I said to them as we drifted apart:
"I marvel such beauty to see,

But a mermaid is born without a heart,
And can never be bride to me.

“Besides, it is written in legends old,
That when mermaids are won and wed—
In the first embrace the strong and the bold
Are numbered along with the dead.

“And while man will risk a life for a kiss,
Loves beauty in nature and art,
He seeks for more than a moment of bliss,
And longs for a maid with a heart.”

JIM ROOT

You vow no heroes now are born,
And laugh the present race to scorn?
Listen, Cynic, aye, listen well,
While I a hero's story tell.
And challenge e'en Achilles old
To stand beside my hero bold.
Not on the battle-field fought he —
Not in the lists of chivalry —
But yesterday at Hinckly town
That brave Jim Root achieved renown.
Just plain Jim Root, unknown to fame
Until he ran that Hinckly train;
And snatched two hundred souls from death,
Who felt the Reaper's scorching breath.
Precisely at the hour of two
The daily limited mail was due.
And Jim, the master engineer,
Was driving on without a fear,
Yet gravely watched the piston stroke,
And wondered at a pall of smoke —
That arching o'er him left and right —
Was turning day to darkest night.
Then heard the anxious cries that came:
"Back! back! the woods are all aflame."
But on he sped, the warnings vain,
And Hinckly saw his rescue train.

“Aboard! aboard! ye old and young!
Fly, fly from Hinckly, every one.”
Thus spake the hero, brave Jim Root,
Tho’ scorched and burned from head to foot.
“Flee for your lives,” he cried again,
“Ye mothers, children, maids and men.”
Then backward with a mighty roar
With twice a hundred souls, aye more;
Through blinding smoke and fearful flame,
Towards the lakeside rushed the train.
Hemmed in by fire on every side,
With throttle standing open wide,
On, on it sped, with giant stride.
The roadway roofed with lurid fire,
The train itself a moving pyre,
While flaming trees like arrows fell,
Shot straight from out the mouth of hell.
Twice, thrice the scorching billows came
And licked his cheeks with tongues of flame,
Till burned and blistered there he stands,
Holding the lever in his hands.
And never did his steely nerve
One instant from its duty swerve.
At last, thank God, and also Jim,
Alive they reached the water’s rim,
Then glancing backward whence they came,
Saw naught except a sea of flame.

JIM ROOT

Honor and fame for him I claim,
Who nobly ran that rescue train;
Honor, I say, to brave Jim Root,
A hero, sir, from cap to boot!

THE MOON

To S. D. H.

O Moon, you are a gypsy,
And the wisest gypsy too,
For the sober and the tipsy
Pass you nightly in review.

You come with wisdom laden,
Garnered round the mother earth;
For like a gypsy maiden,
You have wandered since your birth.

You nightly hear the wailing
Of the wicked, wretched, poor —
Sad cries, but unavailing,
While longings are impure.

Envy, hatred, fiery passion
Smite us fiercely with the rod,
Yet with some it seems the fashion
To ascribe our ills to God.

* * * *

It matters not to dreamer
Whether dream be long or brief,
If in the dream the dreamer
Granted brothers sweet relief.

THE MOON

And though upon Time's dial
There is seeming wrong and strife,
We may rise from ev'ry trial
With a nobler view of life.

For claims of grief and sorrow
Turn these human hearts aright,
So in the near to-morrow
We shall sooner see the light.

And when our fears would worry
He bids them, "Peace be still,"
To neither shrink nor hurry,
But wait the Master's will.

With evil all forsaken
The light will o'er us stream,
And we shall re-awaken
From the shadow and the dream.

* * * *

You behold how mortals travel
Through unnumbered years of strife,
Vainly seeking to unravel
All the tangled skein of life.

Winding, weaving, interlacing,
Walking backward to the light;
Now advancing, now retracing,
Hardly knowing what is right.

STORY AND SONG

Asking why and whence and whither
Runs the destiny of man—
Born to bud, to bloom, to wither—
Dust and ashes once again.

That's the casket, not the jewel,
That's the husk, but not the corn;
Sleep is good and never cruel,
Since we waken at the morn.

Dying daily, daily learning,
Dying to this sense of life;
To our heritage returning,
After countless years of strife.

Although we gaze in wonder
At the labyrinths we tread,
His hand is over yonder,
Holding singly ev'ry thread.

And He draws us in His kindness
To the harmony above,
Showing mercy when in blindness
We reject a Father's love.

So I hold that we are moving
Onward, upward, though we pause,
And the naught of error proving
Knowing God alone is Cause.

MARJORIE

Little Marjorie's still and white,
Wakes not with the morning light;
Soft hands folded on her breast,
Weary Marjorie's now at rest.

Blessed Marjorie sleeps in peace,
All her pains and sorrows cease;
She's not dead, she only keeps
Tryst with Him who said: She sleeps.

A PRECIOUS FLOWER

In Memory of Frances

"Guard this," said the King to the gardener;
 "'Tis a plant exceedingly rare;
Let it grow to bloom in my royal room
 Beneath thy fostering care."

The gardener welcomed the stranger
 Where the rare exotics grew.
With gentle power he shielded the flower,
 Gave it the sun and the dew.

And never a plant grew fairer
 Within a gardener's fence;
Its sweet perfume, when budding to bloom,
 Was like fragrant frankincense.

And the gardener loved the stranger,
 And tended it day and night,
So its grace and beauty, thro' love and duty,
 Might be to the King a delight.

And the wife of the gardener worshiped
 The stranger from afar,
Who in rain or shine shone with light divine,
 As though it came from a star.

A P R E C I O U S F L O W E R

But near to the hour of blooming
The garden was filled with gloom.
Before the dawn the flower was gone,
And the gardener's heart was a tomb.

Yet a light from out the darkness
Revealed to those who wept
Near the lowly bed of the seeming dead
That the blossom only slept.

And they knew the kingly power
Would waken again their bloom,
And above the earth its beauty and worth
Would brighten the royal room.

And the gardener grew contented,
And the wife from tears refrained,
Waiting the time with faith sublime,
Their blossom will be regained.

With the glory of its beauty
Secure from the clinging sod,
With fragrant breath untouched by death,
A near to the throne of God.

THAT OTHER ROOM

In Memory of I. C. Curtis

As honored trav'ler to a friendly state,
So passed he calmly to that other room,
Not fearing there to meet a frowning fate,
And smiling bravely at the threat of gloom;
For after all he deemed the gated tomb
A lucent doorway that ajar did wait,
To lead him onward where the lights illumine
A joyous scene behind a crystal gate.
So what could angel death do more for him,
Than ope the portal to the seraphim?

Why should he fearful be, who never knew
A coward motive nor an action mean,
Who proudly stood, while legions fawning grew,
And loved the beauty of the soul serene?
A knightly man the earth and heaven between,
Unsullied as the blossom in the dew,
With look undaunted waiting for the screen
Aside to roll and bring a heaven to view.
Thus bravely onward still in manly bloom,
Went he in gladness to that other room.

“PEACE BE STILL”

“PEACE, BE STILL”

In stormiest sea there cometh to me
A message from above ;
Mid the lightning's flash and thunder's crash
I hear the voice of Love :
Peace, be still ! is the whispered word,
Peace, be still ! be still !
And the storm and strife of this dreamland life
Are calmed by the Master's will.

Oh, wand'rer from God, still dwelling in Nod,
Dreading a gale to-day,
Find refuge secure in the One who is pure,
Whom even the winds obey.
Peace be still ! Omnipotent word !
Peace, be still ! be still !
And clamor and din, the tempests of sin
Are hushed by the Father's will.

ONE

Man has one Mind, one Soul, one Life,
One Love that quells all earthly strife,
One Father—Mother, God Divine,
One Christ who comes with healing sign.

One Science leadeth man aright
Towards the Way, the Truth, the Light;
One Great Physician he may call—
One Spirit, God, the All-in-all.

E A S T E R

EASTER

To Thermal Sunday School, Colorado Desert

Hear ye the message of Easter,
Dwellers in desert land,
How seraphs came and in His name
Scattered a Roman band.

Hear ye the story of Easter,
How angels fair as day
For human weal broke Pilate's seal
And rolled the stone away.

That was the mightiest marvel
That ever Time gave birth,
When He, once dead, with stately tread,
Marched from the yawning earth!

Behold the sacred drama!
Earth pauses for a time,
While hosts above in hope and love
Review the scene sublime.

One touch of God's white angel
Unlocks the narrow room;
Then he who died, the Crucified,
Arises from the tomb.

STORY AND SONG

Oh, wonderous might and wisdom!
The world again is trod
By Him whom death had robbed of breath,
The incarnate Son of God!

“Lo, see, the Lord is risen!”
The radiant angel said.
“Have ye no fear, He is not here;
He liveth that was dead.”

He liveth! aye, he conquered
The fatal foe of men;
And each one now should lowly bow
To Christ of Bethlehem.

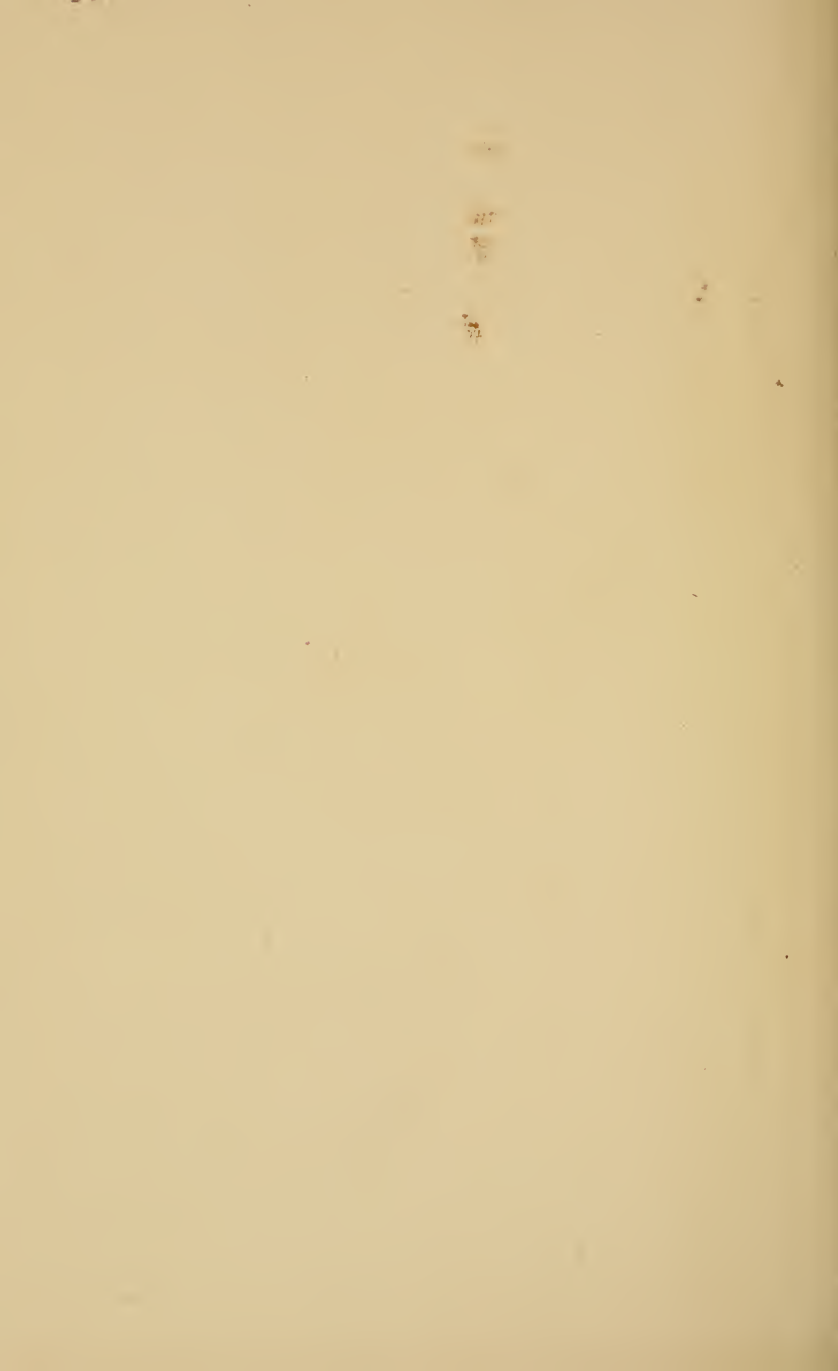
List ye this Easter morning
For silent word or sign—
A message clear that each may hear
From Christ the Son divine.

Hark! 'tis the Savior calling:
“Come, O come to me!
Open thine heart, I would not depart;
Let me abide with thee!”

Thus will the Easter message
Calm the storm and strife,
Soothe our sorrows, brighten the morrows,
And bless our daily life.

THE END







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